MOUNT SAINT BRANDON

Religious Celebration;

THE SCENERY, ANTIQUITIES,

AND

HISTORY OF WEST KERRY,

BY JAMES J. LONG,

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PREFACE.

The following pages were prepared for the columns of the journal with which I am connected, to commemorate the solemn religious services in honor of the great St. BRANDON, Patron of Kerry. I yield to a generally and flatteringly expressed desire to present them to the public in a collected form, as a permanent record of that memorable event, and, also, as a slight attempt to do justice to the glorious scenery, the interesting antiquarian remains, the varied historic associations, and the rare personal characteristics of West Kerry, which I pride in, not the less that they surround the place of my birth and affections. If my labors tend in any way to interest the general public in this romantic, though neglected district, in the somewhat primative but ever amiable people who dwell there, and in the trials and triumphs of the Faith for which the place and the people are so remarkable, I shall feel more than satisfied.

Of the celebration itself, of him in whose honor it took place, and of the good it did, and, please God, will do, so much is said further on, that I will content myself here with referring the reader to the truly elequent sermons preached on the occasion by the Very Rev. Father MURPHY, O.P., and the Lord Bishop of Kerry, reported at the end of this little volume.

There are a few local notes which may be alluded to in this place. The name of our Patron, it will be seen, is spelled differently. In the Church Offices, and in published prints, generally, the Saint is called BRENDAN. In the old English verse and prose Lives, the spelling is BRANDAN. But the local name, and, therefore, the one I have used, is BRANDON. I have adopted it from the many localities in Kerry named after the Saint. I will mention some of these—Brandon Hill, the holy mount itself; St. Brandon's Oratory, and St. Brandon's Well, on the summit of Brandon Mountain; Brandon head and Brandon bay, both in the immediate vicinity; Brandonwell, a townland, and Brandonwell, a holy well, near the church and abbey, dedicated to the saint at Ardfert. The Irish form of the name is Brandan, corresponding with the old English form. The Saint's house at Keelmalchedar has been always called by the people of the place, "*Fothrach Brandain.*"

From excavations recently made on the summit of Mount St. Brandon, it is evident that the cell-like Oratory, at the head of which stands the rude stone Altar, with its wooden cross, is of comparatively, modern date. (This wooden Cross and the upper portion of the Altar were erected by Father Brosnan in 1867). It is also evident that there stood here formerly a church of much larger dimensions, and importance. It would appear that when this was demolished in the convulsions of troubled times, the followers of the holy founder erected the smaller and ruder oratory on the same spot. The excavations have not yet been completed, but I understand it is intended to complete the work immediately and thoroughly. I may state here that there is a pretty little plateau, forming a few acres of nice green soil, situated at the brink of the sea on the western shoulder of Brandon bay, and lying beneath a precipitous elevation of about a thousand feet. This plateau is called "*Fuihir na manach*," i.e., "the good land of the monks," and here may be seen various monastic remains, which are of a comparatively modern erection.

Within three quarters of a mile of the summit of Mount St. Brandon is a large mound of stones called "*Lachthan na n'oilireach*" i.e.," the Pilgrim's cairn." This forms a distinguishing feature in the *via sacra*, or "pathway of the saints," from Kilmalchedar to the Oratory. This portion of the pathway is bounded by large stones fixed firmly in the ground, to define it, and direct the pilgrim in the event of fogs or mists on the mountain.

But my limited space warns me not to dwell further on a subject which I hope some one, better fitted for the task, will soon investigate as it deserves. I will now let Father BROSNAN, to whom the credit of the late glorious demonstration is mainly due, tell, in his own heart-speaking language, the history of a movement in which Bishop, priests, and people, have so worthily distinguished themselves, and which I have chronicled as a labor of love.

JAMES J. LONG.

July, 1868.

LETTER FROM FATHER BROSNAN.

Tralee, July 5th, 1868.

My dear Mr. Long,—As you are about re-issuing, in pamphlet form, your papers as published in the Chronicle on the late Mount St. Brandon celebration, I have pleasure in acceding to your wish—and a like wish has been expressed to me by many others—that I would give some account of the origin and history of the movement up to the late celebration. Anything I have to say on the subject must be of comparative insignificance after the treatment of it from your able and eloquent pen, and the discourses delivered on the holy mountain, and reported in the Chronicle; nevertheless, in view of the wide-spread and absorbing interest the movement has evoked among the public, perhaps even these minor details may not be unacceptable to your readers. First, then, as regards the origin of the movement, it is simply as follows:—At the June conference of the Dingle Deanery, 1866, some of the clergy agreed to make an excursion to the mountain summit, but the day named was unpropitious, and they did not go. I was at the time Curate of the Parish of Ferriter, in which union the holy mount stands, and had a call of duty the same day to Ballinknockane, a village at the foot of the mount. Whilst conversing in Irish with some of the farmers of the place, I remarked that if the day had been fine several priests would be on the mountain. 'What a pity,' said they at once, 'that we wouldn't know it, for we would go there with them.' 'If there was Mass there,' I asked, 'would the people go?' 'Oh,' cried they, '*the world would go there.*' 'Well,' said I, 'I, for one, would be delighted to go and say Mass there.' All appeared overjoyed and, without waiting further authority, gave out positively that Mass was to be on the mountain. In a few days the news had spread all over the barony to the intense gratification of the people. Having heard this, I considered it right to consult the Bishop of the diocese on the matter—which I did the following week. Having stated the circumstances to his Lordship, I asked him what he thought of the subject. 'What do I think of it,' was his Lordship's reply, 'why, I am delighted with it, and will go there myself also;' at the same time expressing a wish that his approaching visitation to the district should be availed of for the purpose. This having proved impracticable, I intimated to the people of the parish residing near the mountain, that I would go up and say Mass the first available fine day. This turned out to be the 20th of August following—the Feast of St Bernard—when, and for the first time, I had the happiness, the very great happiness, of celebrating the Divine Mysteries on the site and remains of the old Altar of St Brandon's Oratory. My second visit to, and Mass on the hallowed spot took place on the holy patron's own feast day, the 16th of the following May, 1867, the third being that of last Sunday, the memorable 28th of June of this present year, 1868.

The first of these pilgramages was joined in by some six or seven hundred of the parishioners—our parish priest and another clergyman accompanying us to the base of the mountain. This was a week day; and the only definite notice the people had was our presence along the route from the Presbytery at Ferriter. No sooner were we observed, and that it became known we were *en route*, than those employed out of doors flinging aside the implements of their busy toil, sped onwards, followed in all haste by the other members of their families, male and female, who felt themselves equal to the journey. It was a glorious day; the air so still and balmy on the mountain top, that the candles upon the altar burned without a flicker, unshaded and uncovered. When it became known through the neighbourhood that Mass had been said on the mountain, numbers who had purposed asssisting at it cried bitterly at not being present. Finding that the movement thus initiated had taken such deep hold upon the people's hearts, it was resolved shortly after, in accordance with the pious wishes of the faithful, that the next pilgrimage to the holy mount would take place on St Brandon's own Feast day, the 16th of May next following. For weeks before that day the hearts and eyes of at least one half the people of the barony were fixed on the holy mount, but, greatly to their discouragement, the weather continued bad, and the mountains all round were covered with continuous mists and clouds. On the 15th of May, however, the weather looked more favorable, and on the following morning at dawn, there was not a speck of cloud, or mist, or fog, on any of the mountains. About three thousand of the faithful made the ascent of the holy mount that morning, many having gone there on foot from the remotest ends of the parishes of Lispole and Ventry, and some even fasting in order to receive

the Blessed Eucharist on the hallowed mount. Mass was not commenced until 12 o'clock, but about 10 o'clock a cold, sharp mist fell upon the mountain, and continued until after Divine Service had concluded, when the people soon left for home. But before leaving the mountain, it was resolved on, that the next and third pilgrimage to the holy mount would be made the year following on the 24th of June—the Feast of St John the Baptist—a day of special veneration and devotion in the locality. In the meantime the writer of these lines was transferred to his present mission in Tralee, where, considering that his official connexion with the historic locality had ceased, he thought he might be released from his engagement. The Bishop, when consulted, thought otherwise, and required him to go on; his Lordship, at the same time, repeating his formerly expressed resolve to go himself. The day at first appointed for this, the third pilgrimage to the holy mount, being the 24th June, St. John's Day, the Patron Feast of the Parish of Tralee, it was necessarily changed, and the following Sunday, the 28th June, the Eve of Saints Peter and Paul Feast, was substituted in its stead. Here I feel it but due to the pious and magnanimous people of Tralee to say that no sooner was this religious project mooted amongst them, than with the full approval of the Very Rev. the Parish Priest, Dean Mawe, the Catholic community entered into its spirit with all their hearts and souls, as had done their brethren in the West. The zeal, exertions, and arrangements of the Committee of Management, appointed at the public meeting in Tralee, are already on record. Such, simply, have been the origin and history up to the late celebration of these pious pilgrimages. If this 'plain unvarnished' narrative should, in the least, contribute to establish the thoroughly religious character this popular movement has, in my humble judgment, borne from the outset in the public mind, (and, connected with it as has been my lot from the beginning, I frankly confess I never have regarded, and never could regard, it in any other light.) I should feel myself justified in obtruding myself on the notice of the public. Springing from the depths of the people's faith and piety, and their olden attachment to their clergy, associated in their inmost hearts with the sacred traditions and imperishable monuments of their race and religion, and approved of again and again, and blessed by the presence of their chief pastor, the venerable head of this diocese, the movement could not but triumph.

And in this triumph of the people's faith, indomitable and enthusiastic now as ever, is it not plainly seen that the pious faithful children of the ever-faithful Church of Ireland need but find even the weakest arm point to Heaven to follow there? In this triumph of the people's piety, deep and ardent now as ever, do we not plainly see their readiness and zeal to walk in the steep and arduous 'pathway of the saints,' and in the consecrated footprints of their sires? In this triumph of the people's love and gratitude to the sainted fathers and benefactors of their race and country, heartfelt and undying now as ever, have we not seen countless myriads leaving their loved homes at early dawn, traversing miles and miles of road, and bog, and marsh, and mountain, and ascending steep and rugged cliffs in thirst and weariness, to kneel at the shrine, and pray at the oratory of their holy patron and kinsman, the heroic and Apostolic Brandon—he who oft used raise his consecrated hands in prayer and in sacrifice from the summit of that holy mount to bless their fathers and his native Kerry—he who, starting in his frail skiff from the foot of the same holy mount for the great country in the Far West beyond those mighty waters, visited and blessed that new and future home of his beloved Irish.

In this triumph of the people's religion, must we not look upon the solemn services and celebrations on the summit of the highest mountain on which Mass was ever said in Ireland, as a grand solemn commemorative thanksgiving for the fidelity and loyalty of our fathers in the faith, who, during those sad and trying ages of our national church's history, had nought else than the mountain tops or the glens, depths, and no other covering than the canopy of heaven, for the mysteries of man's Redemption. In this triumph of the people's faith, piety, and religion, may we not look upon the glorious demonstration of that last memorable 28th of June on immortal Brandon as the solemn vindication before the world of the people's loyalty, fidelity, and devotion to the instincts and teachings of that faith which our Divine Lord brought from heaven to earth, which St. Patrick brought from Rome to Ireland, which St. Brandon brought to and taught from this holy mount; which, handed down from sire to son, neither fire, famine, persecution, nor the sword, nor foreign hate, nor foreign gold, nor the hungry demon of soup and Souperism, could ever extinguish; and which, praise be to God, the people profess this day from that holy mountain-top, pure, holy, saving and entire, unextinguished and unextinguishable, as Brandon preached it!

Those, my dear sir, have, I think, been in the minds of the people, the import and objects of these pious pilgrimages—of these Mount St. Brandon celebrations.

To you, sir, the faithful and eloquent chronicler of these events, a deep debt of gratitude is due for your devotion and services on this, as on all other occasions, to the people's best and dearest interests. Wishing you that appreciation and success, which your manly, generous, and independent character so eminently deserve, —I am, my dear Mr Long, very sincerely yours,

T. Brosnan, C.C.

James J. Long, Esq.,
Editor *Tralee Chronicle*.

PRELIMINARY VISIT TO SAINT BRANDON'S ORATORY,

ON THE 8TH OF JUNE, 1868.

We had lately the pleasure of authoritatively announcing that solemn religious services will take place in St Brandon's Oratory on the summit of Brandon Mountain, on the last Sunday in this month, weather permitting. The announcement awoke all the enthusiasm of the people of the county, which hails the illustrious Saint as its Patron. The feeling which inspired so many of the people of west Kerry some short time ago, and at a very brief notice, to ascend from the Dingle side and assist at the Mass celebrated again on the hallowed site for the first time after the lapse of so many centuries of persecution, now filled the hearts of the multitude in Tralee, and in the other towns and districts—and the pious spirit extended even to the adjoining counties.—All love and cherish the memory of St Brandon—all glory in his great works—all regard with veneration the memorials of him which have survived the devastating powers of thirteen centuries. But, for reasons which it is needless here to dwell on, comparatively few of those now living at this side of the Mountain had ever visited his sacred shrine, placed so remote from earth, so near to Heaven. It needed, however, but the occasion, which, under the auspices of the beloved Bishop of Kerry—worthy successor of St Brandon—has been so happily afforded, to secure better things. Time, vainly warred against the immortal fame of him whom the Apostle of Ireland bequeathed as a heavenly messenger of grace and peace and bliss to the West, whose birth and work in Kerry Patrick foretold, and whose instruction Bridget aided. But the casket, so to speak, of this precious treasure—the immediate local traditions that tended so much to enshrine the life and labours of the Saint in the breasts of the faithful, were, in many respects, rudely sundered, in the days when the powers of earth and hell sought to root out the church which Brandon established in his native Kerry firmly as the Rock of Peter. And so things went on, until a generation came who almost thought there were no means of reaching the sacred shrine at which their forefathers worshipped and were sanctified. It was scarcely then to be wondered at, that many living remote from the Mountain, and who had never visited it, on hearing of the approaching solemnities, questioned each other as to whether they could now walk in the steps which Brandon and his companions hallowed on their journeys to the Oratory on the summit of the Mountain that bears his name. To set this difficulty at rest, it was necessary 'to see and believe.' And, accordingly, a small party set out on Monday June 8th from Tralee to explore the place, and report the result.

Leaving the Tralee and Dingle post road at Bunnow, our party found themselves driving along the easy and pleasant road which runs nearer to the shore in the direction of Connor Hill. After three hours easy driving we left Castlegregory beside us and reached the village of Cloghane, snuggly nestled at the end of a pretty creek off Brandon bay, and at the foot of the chain of hills, which, like attendant ministers, surround Mount Brandon.

For a considerable portion of the morning the rain had come down rather freely, and drifting mists on the Tralee mountains, and an ugly looking fog which settled around about 10 o'clock augured but poorly for our chances of accomplishing the object of our journey.—But our spirits were high, nevertheless, and we determined not to give up the undertaking if possible, and we were fortunate in persevering, for, after resting some time at a road side house, the rain ceased, the clouds parted from the bright blue June sky, and the hills began to unveil themselves most invitingly. By the time we reached Cloghane, there was every prospect of a fair and favourable day.

And now we prepare for the work of ascent. The villagers show themselves extremely cordial and obliging. The simple, hearty, earnest, good humoured courtesy of the Irish peasant is seen here in all its pristine virtue. All are ready and anxious to aid us with word and deed We are agreeably assured by old and young that they have themselves been on the mountain top, that the path is clear and well defined all through, and by no means a difficulty to any one who would not mind some reasonable exertion.

They tell us, as a testimony of this, that the present Lady Ventry, accompanied by some lady friends, walked the whole way to the mountain last year. And further, to confirm their confident assurances, a party of the villagers volunteer to accompany us.

We soon ascertain that the ascent from Cloghane may be divided into three parts. For two miles you can ride up at leisure on the ponies of the district. It is needless to add, then, that walking so far is quite an easy matter. Having walked and ridden at intervals, we find ourselves at the end of the first stage, some 2,000 feet above the level of the sea, commanding a splendid and extensive prospect.

And now we enter a defile which displays many of the well known distinguishing characteristics of the Gap of Dunloe and the Giant's Causeway, mingled together. In front the mountains tower aloft in stately grandeur, Brandon enthroned like a monarch among giants, its mighty head lightly wreathed in white floating clouds, its sides clothed in sombre hues, and at its feet a deep and extensive glen gemmed with numerous pretty little lakes, and traversed by many streams.

To proceed further seems to the astonished stranger a task to be given up in despair. How shall he guide his steps amid that awful mass of rocks, chasms, and declivities ? The difficulty was clearly foreseen and amply provided against in the distant past. Look closely. Here we are confronted with a wonderful proof of the Faith and fidelity of our ancestors in those brave days of old —a faith that nerved them to many a mighty work for the honour and glory of God—a fidelity that enabled them in the teeth of every obstable to carry out their pious designs to the fullest. They made a roadway through this almosr impassable pass. Our guides proudly point it out and all can trace it plainly and joyfully along the whole way. Steps are hewn out of the huge rocks ; every difficult point, of marsh, intersecting stream, or perplexing declivity is bridged over with solid stones, time-worn but still firmly set. The work shows unmistakeable proofs of a remote antiquity and a special design. That design is made more manifest by patent facts that speak volumes. Up to this point, the course of this rude roadway skirted around the other side of the valley. It is traceable from near the ruined church of Cloghane on to the Oratory—a distance thus counted, amounting altogether to some three miles, It could serve none other than pious purposes—for there is no sign of traffic or other earthly business here ; and further and more extraordinary still, a similar rude roadway is traceable at the other side of the mountain, leading from far famed Keelmalchedar to the same destination, a distance of nearly seven miles ! What a ' sermon in stones' may we not read here, written, with indelible power, mute but all eloqnent ! From the soul of the buried Past it comes like a tenderly reproving yet firmly assuring voice, telling us to be up and doing, with courageous heart—' Excelsior' !

Following this plain path, we make our way through the second stage of the ascent. We breast the brow of the hill that overhangs the stupendous valley ; soon find ourselves coursing through a maze of massive rocks, along the sides of tiny lakes ; anon, up soft green slopes ; and again through marshy ground. Still our footsteps are made firm by the generous forethought of our olden friends, who planned and executed this line, when county surveyors and road sessions were as little known as modern taxes. We are surprised to find how pleasantly we have reached the end of the second stage.

The first stage, which, as we have said, may be traversed on horseback, is two-thirds of the whole ascent.— The second ends at the foot of a sublime steep, and now another quarter of a mile of steady work will bring us to the summit. But here it is meet to pause awhile, and ponder leisurely on the glorious scene, while resting.

Above us—

> " The proud top of the majestic hill
> Shines in the azure air, serene and bright."

The extreme point on which the Oratory is situated is clearly visible now. We are told that visitors sometimes are satisfied not to proceed further. For ourselves, we have gone too far not to go on, and feast our eyes without delay on that crowning Panorama of Nature's glories which rewards the toiler to the top, and which was the day-dream of our school days *lang syne* in the West.— But, even by remaining here, the visitor will find more than enough to make him congratulate himself right heartily on his trip. At his feet lies a noble valley, stretchiug away to the bounds of Connor Hill. The lakes and the rivulets sparkle in the sunlight where the sun can penetrate, or add a deeper tint to the shade where gloomy grandeur reigns undisturbed.

Pastoral life peeps out here and there, to remind us that we are still in the material world. The mountain cattle, and their caretakers, disport themselves as assuredly ' at home' at this awful elevation as the most cherished pets of the lowland farms. The aged herd and the juvenile shepherdess—several of whom came up to cheer our party—leave us as occasion needs to run up or down dizzy steeps, after a straying sheep or a republican goat, as cooly and securely as if they were pro-

menading Denny-street. Blessings on them! May they long enjoy the merry voice, the bright eye, the steady head, the fleet foot, the healthy frame, and the warm heart peculiar to each and all. The poetry of nature is proudly, though unconsciously, mirrored in those humble peasants. We could not help regretting that while the Queen of those islands records how often and how gladly her Royal family and herself shower Royal favours on the scenes and people of 'Rude Calodonia,' the noble Irish Highlands are doomed so much to the fate of the flowers that—

'Blush unseen,
Or waste their sweetness on the desert air,'

—When will we find Majesty recording its experience of tht Kerry Highlands, after the fashion noted by the royal hand in Scotland: 'We were always in the habit of conversing with the Highlanders, with whom one comes so much in contact in the Highlands. The Prince highly appreciated the good breeding, simplicity, and intelligence, which make it so pleasant, and even instructive to talk to them.' When will the good breeding, the simplicity, and the intelligence of the Irish Highlanders —so pleasant and instructive—be thus experienced, appreciated, and profited by? Such recognition and praise is not more than they deserve. But, perhaps, it would spoil them. They bask in the smiling majesty of a mightier monarch, In the proud palace of Nature and of Nature's God, they are loved and blessed. Better so!

From these thoughts our mind is called away to contemplate another portion of the scene. Far to the east, as far as the eye can reach, opens a magnificent vision. Sea and shore, islands and lakes, valleys and hills, make up a picture, animated and beautiful enough to make the coldest heart beat warmly in presence of those wonderous proofs of the dread Creator's power and beneficence.

But we must on! We gain the brow of the steep—'*Oh, God, how beautiful!*' Now can we feel what Wordsworth felt, when he paid homage to the Most High on mountain steeps and summits—

"Oh, 'twas an unimaginable sight!
Clouds, mists, streams, watery rocks and emerald turf,
Clouds of all tincture, rocks and sapphire sky,
Commingled, confused, and mutually inflamed,
Molten together, and composing thus,
Each lost in each, that marvellous array
Of temple, palace, citadel, and huge
Fantastic pomp of structure without name,
In fleecy folds voluminous, enwrapped."

—We pause—breathless, amazed, confused. The sight is too great, too broad, too varied, too glorious, to be taken in at a glance We are over three thousand feet above the level of the sea, and in the awful depths below, and all away to the west, lies the still more awful Atlantic—

"Glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,
Calm or convuls'd—in breeze, or gale, or storm
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving, boundless, endless, and sublime—
The image of Eternity—the throne
Of the Invisible"—

—All hail! Our meditations are suspended, for we are pleasingly reminded by the faithful guides that the final object of our journey is now within easy access. Up a gentle slope, clad in rich verdure, the soft thick dewy grass most grateful to tired feet, we run, the mountain, and sea breezes blowing in a manner exquisitively refreshing. A few minutes more, and we find ourselves within the Oratory. It stands in a slightly indented or hollowed space on the extreme summit of the mountain, and commands an unobstructed view at all sides. The remains of the ruin are plainly defined. For the most part they are moss-covered, and in many places crumbling with age. Facing the east, in true cannonical order rises the venerable stone-built altar now crowned with a simple wooden cross. A little to the west, St. Brandon's Well offers to the visitor a perpetual supply of the most delicious water—cool, clear and sparkling. We pray at the altar, we drink from the well,and thus composed and refreshed arise to look around.

The first burst of the prospect seen from the top of the precipitous ascent was startling in the extreme. The view which now meets the eye at the other side is bewilderingly beautiful. We are nearly a thousand feet above the point from which we surveyed this scene from the stage below.—We are now standing on an elevation of 3,125 feet. All below and about is rolled out before us—a living map.—Brandon Bay and Tralee Bay seem all but united. The thin line of land that separates them varies the expanse of water, while the bright sandy coasts of each, glowing like burnished gold in the sun's brilliant rays, set off to greater advantage the broad green valleys and the dark brown hills that adjoin. The Samphires and Magherees are small but lovely. Farther on is Kerry Head, Farther still the lordly Shannon crowned by Loop Head. Farther on again, Arran Islands seem to realise the fairy ideal of Hy-Brasail. The Connemara mountains rim the horizon in that point. The Atlantic from Brandon Head out is seen for a vast distance, until the sea and sky get confused, The eye needs rest, after straining to take in this vast prospect.—Vapours on a hill below—a hill that from here looks very humble, and yet it is none other than lofty Slievemish—give warning to make the most of our time, or the atmosphere about us may soon be clouded. Turning to the west the bay of Smerwick presents itself, a thing of beauty.—Sybil Head, and the pretty hills known as the 'Three

Sisters,' the magnificent Blasquet group of islands, and Marhan Mountain, standing out like a Queen of the May —all are seen, and challenge attention. On towards the south the broad expanse of Dingle Bay, with the most interesting points on the coast to the sparkling Skelligs, and with glimpses as far as Bantry, make up a prospect which we could lovingly dwell on four hours. But instead of hours we can command only minutes. Looking inland, the Tralee, Killarney and some of the Cork mountains present a rare illustration of mountain scenery. What a place for Contemplation was this! How happily could the saintly soul withdrawn from the world commune with God here! Can we any longer wonder why Brandon selected this spot for his prayerful Retreat ? Can we not almost hear again the outpourings of those heavenly feelings which proceeded from his pure soul as he knelt in lowly reverence here on the heights of the eternal hills, surrounded by the miraculous works of the Creator's hand. A poet of our land and day —one of whom Ireland might well be proud—has caught the holy inspiration of the Saint, and wedded to sweetest music the words attributed to Kerry's glorious Apostle, in an hour of contemplation of which this scene is powerfully suggestive. Thus does Denis Florence MacCarthy open his delightful poem regarding our saint. Brandon addressing his benevolent Foster-mother, Ita, says:—

Oh, Ita, mother of my heart and mind,
My nourisher—my fosterer—my friend,
Who taught me first to God's great will resigned,
Before His shining altar steps to bend,
Who poured his word upon my soul like balm,
And on my eyes, what pious fancy paints—
And on my ear the sweetly swelling psalm,
And all the sacred knowledge of the saints.

Thou knowest, oh, my mother! how to thee,
The blessed Ereus led me when a boy,
And how, within thine arms, and at thy knee,
I learned the love that death cannot destroy:
And how I parted hence with bitter tears,
And felt when turning from thy friendly door
In the reality of ripening years,
My paradise of childhood was no more.

I wept—but not with sin such tear drops flow,
I sighed—for earthly things with Heaven entwine,
Tears make the harvest of the heart to grow,
And love though human, is almost divine,
The heart that loves not, knows not how to pray,
The eye can never smile that never weeps,
'Tis through our sigh's Hope's smiling sunbeams play,
And through our tears the bow of Promise peeps.

I grew to manhood by the western wave,
Among the mighty mountains on the shore,
My bed the rock, within some natural cave,
My food what'er the sea or season's bore,
My occupation, morn', noon, and night,
The only dream my hasty slumbers gave,
Was Time's unheeding, unreturning flight,
And the great world that lies byond the grave.

And thus, wher'er I went, all things to me,
Assumed the one deep colour of my mind,
Great Nature's prayer rose from the murmuring sea,
And sinful man sighed in the wintry wind
The thick-veiled clouds, by shedding many a tear,
Like penitents, grew purified and bright,
And struggling through earth's atmosphere.
Passed to the regions of eternal light.

I loved to watch the clouds now dark and dun,
In long procession and funeral line,
Pass with slow pace across the glorious sun,
Like hooded monks before a dazling shrine,
And now with gentler beauty as they rolled,
Along the azure vault in gladsome May,
Gleaming pure white, and edged with broidered gold,
Like snowy vestments on the Virgin's day.

And then, I saw the mighty sea expand,
Like Time's unmeasured and unfathomed waves,
One with its tidemarks on the ridgy sands,
The other with its line of weedy graves,
And, as beyond the outstretched wave of Time,
The eye of fate a brighter land may meet,
So did I dream of some more sunny clime,
Beyond the waste of waters at my feet.

With such culture, it is not strange that Brandon's life was rich in saintly works. But this is a part of the subject which we must reserve for another day. We have now accompanied our present mission, and, right well pleased, and more than satisfied, we return. After an easy and pleasant descent, we reach Cloghane. Here occurred not the least pleasing incident of this eventful day. The estimable Protestant Rector of the parish, in the most kindly manner, sent for and offered to the priest who accompanied us the hospitalities of the Rectory for the excursionists. Having been otherwise amply provided for in this important particular, the offer was gratefully declined; but our good *Soggarth Aroon* waited on the considerate clergyman and thanked him as he deserved, This, we are glad to say, is not the only proof of the interest which men, irrespective of creed or party, have manifested in this subject. We have before us at this moment a most interesting and valuableletter from the late Archdeacon Rowan to D F McCarthy, regarding St Brandon, whose life that gifted Kerryman was engaged in writing. The death of Dr Rowan stopped the publication of that valuable work. This was not the only loss the literature of Kerry sustained on that account. On this subject, and on the life and works of Kerry's Patron, we shall have more to say on an early day. It but remains now to tell that the object of our preliminary mission having been so completely accomplished, our party returned to Tralee, with high hopes for the great day—next Sunday three weeks. We return, prouder of our county than we were when starting, prouder of our faith, prouder of the days of old, and prouder, too, of the days to come.

ST. BRANDON'S EARLY LIFE, AND COTEMPORARIES,

FOUNDATIONS OF ARDFERT, INNISFALLEN AND AGHADOE.

In the catalogue of the first Irish saints, it is recorded Ireland appeared before St. Patrick in a prophetic vision, bathed in liquid light; its plains, its mountains, its valleys, seemed illumined with an environing and all-penetrating flame; then its dazzling brightness paled, and only the head-lands—with their summits—seemed sparkling still; then the mountains grew dark, and scattered gleams shone feebly in the depths of the valleys. This, says an eminent writer on those saints of Erin, is the image of Irish sanctity; these are the three epochs of her history, the three orders of her paradise. The third is holy, the second more holy; the first had been most holy. The first had the glory of the noontide sun; the second shone with the sweet pale light of the moon; the third shone like the stars.

We are about to review and commemorate a period when the dazzling brightness of the holiest day was still felt; while the sweet pale moon and the golden stars were, as on a lovely evening, glittering in the sacred horizon of Ireland's Faith.

During the mission of St. Patrick in Munster, after teaching and baptising vast multitudes, who crossed the Shannon from Clare, he blessed the rich and beautiful country of Thomond, and foretold the birth of the celebrated Senan of Inniscattery. Our Apostle then directed his course to the district of Luachra, near the borders of Kerry, where he prophesied that "St. Brandon, of the race of Hua-Alta, a great Patriarch of Monks, and the Star of the Western World, would be born; and that his birth would take place some years after his own death." The Annals of Innisfallen record that Patrick died on the 17th of March, A.D. 465.—Twenty years afterwards—viz., in the year 484—the prophesy was fulfilled: Brandon was born in our county, not far from Tralee.

Smith says, by monkish authors Kerry was called the country of St. Brandon, who was the patron saint, and to whom the principal cathedral church (Ardfert) was dedicated. From this saint, adds the historian, a very high and remarkable mountain in the western part of the country was named *Brandon Hill*, there being the remains of a small oratory on its summit that also bears his name, which is likewise given to the adjoining bay. This is sufficiently indicative of the locality of Brandon's birth.

His father was Finloga, of the distinguished family of Hua-Alta. When a mere infant, he was placed under the care of St. Ita.

In the vast religious and monastic movement that then made Ireland a blooming Thebias (writes the eminent Douay professor, De Barneval,) in the neighbourhood of the holy Anchorets lived Anchoretesses no less holy; the companies of virgins following their spiritual mother, and seeking the place of their repose, passed beside troops of disciples, journeying with their masters; the convents opened indifferently to the brethren and the sisters that sought hospitality, and sometimes the saints who, on the eve, had offered this hospitality took up, in the morning, their staff for a journey, leaving their weaker sisters the house which they had built, the implements they had fashioned, the fields they had cleared. We accordingly find, here and there, traces of the Christian relations, the happy associations or influences, from which the holiest and firmest men, the greatest and most respected women in the Church, might gather, without danger and without scandal, sweet and useful fruit. The pupils of these skilful mistresses became Abbots or Bishops, and preserved a holy and tender affection for those whom they call their nurses. Thus Brandon was brought up by Ita.

Our Annalists style saint Ita the Bridget of Munster. She was descended from a branch of the princely house of the Desii, in the County of Waterford. At an early age, she signified her intention of consecrating herself to God, but her parents being of a worldly disposition, were at first averse to her wishes, & refused to grant their assent. Their reluctance, however, having been removed, Ita proceeded to the church of St Declans from whom she received the white veil and was enrolled in the list of consecrated virgins.—Sometime after, she repaired to the territory of Hy-Conaill

in the County of Limerick, and at the foot of the mountain, Luachra, in a retired spot called Cluain-Credhuil, she fixed her residence, and was soon joined by numbers of pious maidens who came from all parts of Ireland to place themselves under her direction. The austerity which this holy Virgin had practiced was extraordinary, says her biographer, she performed many miracles and was favoured with the gift of prophecy. Dr Lanigan, while questioning the statement, that Brandon was reared by Ita in his infancy says, it is certain a great intimacy existed between the two Saints, that Ita was deeply attached to Brandon, and seems to have been a relation of his. Colgan's *Acta Sanctorum* is positive that our Patron was placed under her care, and remained with her five years, when he was led away by Bishop Ercus, in order to receive from himself the more solid instruction necessary for his advancing years.

Lanigan says this Ercns was, perhaps, the celebrated Bishop of Slane, the friend of St Bridget, and, being of a Munster family, might have been connected with that of Brandon. Ware, Smith, and others, tell us that the prelate who took Brandon under his care was Bishop of Ardfert.

Having spent with the Bishop as many years as were necessary to complete his elementary course, our Patron proceeded to make further progress in his theological studies under St Jarlath, of Tuam. The great founder of the now fourth Archeopiscopal See of Ireland was son of Loga, or Lughus, of the noble house of Conmacnie. He formed a monastery and school at Cluanfois (near Tuam), which was resorted to by several students, including St Colman founder of the See of Cloyne. By the advice of Brandon, Jarlath removed to Tuam. It is not positively known whether he was consecrated before or after settling there, but it is certain that he was the first Bishop of Tuam, where his memory has been ever since highly venerated, and where the Cathedral is dedicated in his name. Worthy predecessor of the present 'Lion of the Fold of Judah.'

We next find Brandon at St Finian's famous school at Clonard, in Meath, where we meet him in conjunction with the most illustrious Saints of the age. The reputation of the gifted teacher of Clonard was so great that crowds of students and distinguished persons flocked to his school and monastery. He is said to have had in the course of his teaching three thousand scholars, including the two Brandons, the two Kierans, Columbkille, &c., our Patron's cotemporaries.

The second Brandon was descended from Corb, Prince of the Decies in Munster, and is called Brandon of Birr because of the Abbey he founded in Birr, in the present barony of Fercall, Kings County. In the acts of St Finian, of Clonard, he is characterised as a prophet, and one of the leading men in the schools of Ireland. This Brandon was a great favourite with his namesake, the Patron of Kerry.

The elder Kieran, called St Kieran of Clonmacnois, is usually styled the *son of the carpenter*, as his father was of that trade. He erected in 548 the Monastery of Clonmacnoise on the western bank of the Shannon, on a site granted him by Dermot, King of Ireland. Before that, he spent several years in St Senan's, Monastery of Inniscattery, situate on a beautiful island of that name in the mouth of the Shannon, where he was employed as providore for the poor and the stranger.

We read in the Lives, that Kieran and Brandon afterwards waited on St Senan at Inniscattery to make their confessions to him. Another record says, they called upon Senan to request that he would become their spiritual director and confessor, and that they fixed upon him because he was older and superior in rank, he being a Bishop and they then only priests. Colgan says, it was usual with the holy men of those days to choose a particular director of conscience, who, in Irish was called *Aumchara*, *i.e.* spiritual friend or father.

In St Kieran's Monastery of Clanmacnoise was ordained St Comhgall, founder of the world-famed Monastery and Schools of Bangor (near Belfast), and whose birth St Patrick prophesied, calling him Comhgall *i.e.* *beautiful pledge*. The number of persons that flocked to place themselves under this holy Abbot was so great, that as one place could not contain them it became necessary to establish various monasteries and cells in which, taken together, it was computed that there were 3,000 monks all observing St Comhgall's rule and superintended by him. Amongst them is mentioned Cormac, King of South Leinster, and St Columbanus, one of the greatest men of his age, and whose wonderful labours in Ireland and on the Continent in the cause of religion, have been gratefully extolled by many writers. This Saint has left us a remarkable proof of the faith of the ancient Irish church. Writing to Pope Boniface IV, he says: 'For we, Irish, are disciples of St Peter, and St Paul, and of all the divinely inspired canonical writers; Among us neither Jew, heretic, nor schismatic can be found, *but the Catholic faith, entire and unshaken, precisely as we have receeived it from you, who are the successor of the Holy Apostles*. For, as I have already said, we are attached to the chair of St Peter and although Rome is great and renowned, yet with us it is great and distinguished only on account of that Apostolic chair. Through the two apostles of Christ ye are almost celestial, and Rome is the head of the churches of

the world,' Thirteen centuries have passed since those lines were penned, and on next Sunday fortnight, with Heaven's blessing, on the eve of the feast of St Peter and St Paul—the multitudes of the Catholics of Kerry will go in holy pilgrimage to the Oratory of their saintly Patron to give glory to God and honour to His Saints, that the religion of Faithful Ireland in the Nineteenth century is the same as it was in the Sixth century. What soul-stirring lessons may not be derived from this sublime fact! We saw above, evidence of the sacred observance of the Sacrament of Penance in the early ages of the Irish Church—now, we find evidence that our forefathers in those days believed as we do regarding the Supremacy of the See of Rome, and the source whence the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Irish Church had been derived. We will soon find other evidences. Truly has Ireland's Faith been built upon a Rock!

To return. Another of Brandon's companions at Clonard was St Columbkille, *i e the dove of the churches.*—He was of a princely race, having been descended in a direct line from Nial of the Nine Hostages, and born in the County Donegal, afterwards so celebrated by the production of the Annals of the Four Masters. By his intense application to sacred literature, and his extraordinary rigorous mode of life, Columbkille elicited the admiration of Saints Finian and Brandon at Clonard. He established numerous monasteries of the Columbian Order in the country, and in 563 he proceeded with twelve companions to Hy, established a monastery there. and then undertook the conversion of the Northern Picts, and the inhabitants of the western isles. Adopting, says Father Brennan, the system which he had been taught at Clonard, he took care to employ the two great ordinary mediums ordained by Providence for the conversion of mankind—gratuitous education, and a priesthood disengaged from the world, and bound down by strict and solemn obligations. By means of these, and with the aid of Heaven, did the Cross and the Gospel at length prevail; the long and dismal reign of idolatry was brought to a close, and compelled to give way to the Kingdom of Christ, and the saint was ever afterwards revered as the patron and apostle of these extensive regions. He established a monastery in the Island of Himba or Hymba, aad was there visited by our Saint Brandon, with Saints Comhgall, Cainnech, and Cormac Hua Leathin. The date of this visit is fixed by Lanigan in the year 563. Columbkille celebrated Mass at their request, and while officiating in their presence. Brandon saw a very bright flame, like a burning pillar, as if rising from his head, which continued from the time of the consecration until the termination of the sacred mysteries. In Adaman's life of Columbkille, it is recorded that the saint 'ordered all things to be prepared for the Eucharist, when he had seen the soul of St Brandon received by the angels,' *i e.* he offered up a Mass of Thanksgiving, as will be done by the venerated Bishop of Kerry on the 28th inst. On another occasion, when the death of St Columbanus, Bishop of Leinster occurred, he said 'I must this day celebrate the Holy Mysteries of the Eucharist for the reverence of that soul which this night being carried beyond the starry firmanent between the choirs of angels ascended into paradise.' We cannot forbear mentioning here another remarkable illustration of the old Faith of Ireland. Cronan, a Munster Bishop, visited St Columba, but, through humility, did all he could to prevent it being known that he was a Bishop. Columba, not having yet discovered that he was one, desired him on a Sunday to celebrate Mass. '*Christi corpus ex more conficere.*' He did so, and when come to the part of it where the consecrated host is broken, called on Columba to join him as a priest in breaking the Lord's bread, '*ut simul quasi duo presbyteri Dominicuum panem frangerent.*'—Columba then coming up to the altar, and looking him in the face, said; 'Christ bless you, brother, do you alone break it according to the episcopal rite; for now we know that you are a Bishop. Why have you hitherto endeavoured to conceal yourself so as not to let us pay that veneration due to you by us.' (Adamnan L 1; c 44) Lanigan observes that this anecdote is more than sufficient to show the falsehood of the silly and unfounded hypothesis of some Presbyterian writers, particularly Scotch, who represent Columba aad his monks as members of their sect, and not acknowledging any superiority by Divine right of Bishop over Priests. This brings us back to another point in the older chain, of special interest to Kerry—introducing us to another of Kerry's glorious Patrons.

Shortly after the time we have been referring to, St Finian, surnamed *Lobhar*, the Leper, flourished. He was a monk of the Columbian Order, and some writers describe him as a disciple of Columbkille. He established the Abbey of Innisfallen. St Finian, writes Smith, flourished towards the middle of the sixth century. He is the Patron Saint of those parts (South Kerry), and to him the Cathedral of Aghadoe is also dedicated. The remains of the Abbey (of Innisfallen) are very extensive, although the walls in many places are levelled to the ground its situation was extremely romantic and retired. Upon the disolution of the monasteries (in the 'Reformation') the possessions of this abbey were granted for military services to an adventurer named Captain Robert Colum. What a sacrilege, after ten hundred years in the service of God!

The See of Aghadoe is generally supposed to have taken rise from the monastery of Innisfallen. St Finian died some time between 675 and 693. In Father Brennan's Ecclesiastical History we read: The Annals of Innisfallen inform us that this Abbey (Innisfallen) was esteemed a Paradise, and had been for many years a seeure sanctuary in which the wealth and most valuable effects of the whole country were deposited. Among its learned men should be mentioned the venerable Gilla Patriek O'Huihair; he was a celebratrd poet, a philosopher, and the founder of several religious houses. The Abbots of Innisfallen continued in regular suceession until the sixteenth century, when the abbey was plundered, & its possessions granted by Queen Elizabeth to a person named Robert Collam. From a note by the Chief Remembrance it appears that the inquisition taken in the 37th of Elizabeth, presents us with only a portion of the possessions of this abbey viz., 180 acres of arable land and the advowson of the churches of Kilertee, Kenmare, and Kilcoman. Collam got the grant of Innisfallen at a rent of £72 3s a year! It was he also appropriated Muckross Abbey. He married one of the daughters of Crosbie, the 'Reformation' Bishop of Ardfert, and died childless, leaving no trace even of his name among the families of the county he sacriligiously plundered.—What contrasts!

We must return from this digression to speak of St Brandon's remaining immediate companion at Clonard—viz St Kieran of Saigir. He was born in Cape Clear, became a scholar of St Finian of Clonard, and in his Lives St Brandon of Kerry is represented to have had intimate dealings with him. Kieran having retired to a lonesome spot since called Saigir. in the territory of Hale, and province of Munster, there led at first the life of a hermit, and after some time erected a monastry, around which a city gradually grew up. He also established a nunnery, and was assiduously engaged in preaching the gospel in Ossory and elsewhere, converting a great number of pagans.—He became a bishop, and is regarded as the founder of the See of Ossery.

By this St Kieran was educated St Carthagh, the elder, who flourished about the year 540. He was grandson of Aengus, King of Cashel, and Lanigan conjectures that he must have been committed to the care of Kieran, immediately after the latter had left Finian's school of Clonard. about, perhaps the year 532. He in course of time became a bishop, and Lanigan quotes several authorities to show that his see, or the scene of his episcopal exertions, was *in Kerry* near the river Mang. Colgan refers to him in connexion with the chieftains of *Kierraghe* and the shore of *Leamhna*, which can be no other than Lough Lean or the Lake of Killarney,

This is of peculiar local interest, but what follows is even more so. We are about to be introduced to another Kerry saint—one of the greatest ornaments of the sixth century—St Carthaghe the second, or Moehuda, founder of the see of Lismore,

St Carthage was born in Kerry, the descendant of Fergus, once Prince of Ulster, who had been killed by O'Lella, king of Connaught, and whose posterity were scattered through various parts of Ireland. Though of noble birth we find him when a boy tending his father's herds, near the banks of the river Mang (Maine) when Providence put him in the way of being introduced to the Holy Bishop Carthagh, the elder. Lanigan gives us the history summarised from the old records. It is related that, as Bishop Carthagh and some of his clergy proceeding in that tract were singing psalms, they were overheard by young Carthagh, who was so delighted by their psalmody that negleeting the herds he followed them as far as the Monastery of *Thnaim*, near Castlemaine, or Killarney, where they were to remain during the night. He did not enter the monastery, but, unknown to the bishop and the people of the house, stopped without near the apartment allotted to the bishop's party, listening to them as they continued to sing, until they lay down to sleep. It being now very late, Moeltuili, the chieftain of the district, who was very fond of Mochuda, and with whom he chiefly lived, became uneasy about him, and sent persons to search for him, who having found him near the monastery, brought him the next day to Moeltuili's residence. Being asked why he had staid out during the night, he answered, "My Lord Chieftain, my reason for not coming to you was my being charmed with the divine song which I heard the holy clergy singing; and I wish I were along with them that I might learn that song." On hearing this, Moeltuili immediately sent for the Bishop, and, when he came, he commended the boy to his care, and to his being pleased to instruct him. The holy prelate, perceiving that Mochuda was gifted with an excellent disposition, received him with joy, and, being attached to him, kept him until he ordained him priest—about the year 589. Being now a priest, our saint constructed a cell, called Killtulach; somewhere between the mountain Mysis and the river Mang. He did not remain there long, for he thence went to Bangor, to place himself under the direction of St. Comghall, and having staid there for some time he returned to his native county, and exerted himself zealously in taking care of a great part of Kerry. By the advice of St. Coleman-elo, he erected at Kathen, in West Meath, a monastery, which soon beeame very celebrated. He drew up a rule for the direetion of his monks, who, as persons flocked to him from various parts, both of Ireland and Great Britain, are said to have swelled to

the number of eight hundred and sixty-seven, all of whom provided for themselves, and the poor, by the labour of their hands. While at Rathan, where he remained forty years, he was consecrated Bishop. Some time after, Moelochtride, Prince of Nandesi, made him a grant of the tracts in which Lismore is situated. In this place he founded a religious establishment about the year 633, which, as he was already Bishop, became an Episcopal See, and in a short time acquired an extraordinary celebrity, and gave rise to a considerable town as the name *Lismore*, *i.e.* great habitation indicates. Its school, or, as it ought be called, University, was for a long time equal at least to any other in Ireland, and, besides the Irish from all parts, was resorted to by students and religious persons—not only from England and the rest of Britain, but likewise from various parts of the continent. St. Cartagh, having completed his establishment, spent the last eighteen months of his life in retirement in a lonesome part of the valley at the east of the town. He died on the 14th of May 637. Professor de Barneral, referring to the touching history of Mochuda, beautifully observes that those ecclesiastical festivals of the Catholic Church, whose pomp and whose simplicity even can have so strange an effect—those processions that traversed Ireland chanting the Psalter—acted on naturally religious souls, and drew with them those whom grace had already prepared. May it prove so again, on the Festival of Brandon as on that of Carthagh, in the year 1868, for many in Kerry bringing them to grace eternal, as is did thirteen hundred years ago for young Mochuda.

Montalembert, in his great work, The Monks of the West, has sketched the story of Mochuda with charming eloquence. When the noble Count of France was so deeply affected by the beautiful history, what should be the feelings of the children of Kerry, who can claim this glorious elected one of Heaven as a native of their county; and who can readily realise in their own minds, after often visiting the actual scene of the ever-memorable occurrence, beside the sweetly-flowing Maine, the original of the picture here presented with all the pathos of a poet's power. Remember, the events took place early in the Seventh century:—

At that period, as ever since, the love and practise of music was a national passion with the Irish. The Missionaries and the Monks, their successors, were also inspired by this passion, and used it for the government and consolation of souls. A pleasant legend depicts to us its influence upon an Irish youth, Mochuda, the son of a great lord of Kerry, kept, like David, his father's flocks in the vast prests which then covered a district now almost altogether without wood. He attracted by his piety and beauty the regard of the Prince of the Province, who called him often in the evening to converse with him, while his wife, a daughter of the King of Munster, showed the same friendship for the young shepherd. In the wood where his cattle fed there passed one day a Bishop, with his suite, chanting Psalms in alternate strophes as they continued their course. The young Mochuda was so rapt by the psalmody that he abandoned his flook, and followed the choir of Monks to the gates of the Monastery, where they were to pass the night. He did not venture to enter with them, but remained outside close to the place where they lay, and where he could hear them continue their song till the hour of repose, the Bishop chanting longest of all after the rest were asleep. The shepherd thus passed the entire night. The chief, who loved him, sought him everywhere, and when at last the young man was brought before him, asked 'why he had not seen his favourite the previous evening?' 'My lord,' said the shepherd, 'I did not come because I was rapt by the divine song which I have heard sung by the holy Priests—please Heaven, that I was with them that I might learn to sing as they do.' The chief in vain admitted him to his table, offered him his sword and buckler, all the tokens of a stirring and prosperous life. 'I want none of your gifts,' the shepherd always replied, 'I want but one thing, to learn the chants which I have heard sung by the saints of God.' In the end he prevailed, and was sent to the Bishop to be made a monk. Such is the legend of St Mochuda, the founder of the 'Vast Monastic City of Lismore.' The modern tourist generally visits Lismore to look over the stately Castle of the Cavendishes, but its most interesting reminisences are connected with the earlier foundation, of which an English poet has written—

> "I see thee Lismore as I muse on the past
> A beacon of light through the vista of ages,
> Which found thee when Europe with night was o'ercast,
> The chosen retreat of her students and ages."

There is much of painful sadness, but more of just pride in the thoughts with which an Irishman must now look back on those memorials of the early ages of the Irish Church—pride, in the creation and continuance of such glorious monuments of all that is noble in man, sadness—not unmixed with other feelings—in deploring their barbarous distruction by men, who, in later times, came to 'civilize' our rich and lovely land, as Judas saluted his Master with a kiss. Clonard, Bangor, Lismore, have fallen, before the ruthless hands of Goths and Vandels. We mourn over the fall of our Holy Places, but are comforted and strengthened in recalling their immortal Founders—

Thus we mourn, but their memory's light
While it shines through our hearts will improve them:
For worth shall look fairer and truth more bright,
When we think how they lived but to love them.

We borrowed the above legend out of The Monks of the West, from an article that appeared in the CHRONICLE early last year; another passage appropriately illustrates our sketch of the times of St Brandon :—

The Monks of the Abbey of St Comhgall were divided into seven choirs, which alternately sang hymns to God night and day. From Bangor went forth the great St Columbanus, who carried the Gospel to the Burgunden's and the Franks, and from Clonard the still greater St Columba, or Columbkille, (*i.e.* the Dove of the Churches) who completed the conversion of Scotland, and whose disciples had, at least, some share in bringing about that of England in later times. Columba was a scion of the great house of O'Neill, and a native of Gartan, in Donegal, where the spot in which he was born is still shown and venerated. The peasantry believe that whoever passes a night in the place will never suffer the orrows of home sickness in exile—'Such, at least,' oberves Count Montalembert, 'is the belief of the poor Irish emigrants who flock thither, when they are about to abandon the confiscated and ravaged soil of their country, to seek their living in America, moved at the moment by a touching recollection of the great missionary who gave up his native land for the love of God and human souls.'

We must not now follow up this train of thought.—Our purpose lies amidst brighter and happier scenes.—We have to trace the mission of St Brandon. Reviewing the history, we have thus far feebly sketched; contemplating Brandon and his companions at the school of Clonard,—beholding the whole island opening into a terrestial paradise of Saints and of Scholars—the whole people, collectively and individually, seeking 'the better part,' and experiencing the entire effect of the Divine promise: that all things else should be added to those who sought *first* the Kingdom of God and His Justice, can we fail to concur in the pious opinion expressed by Father Brennan, that it seemed as if the Almighty had, at this time, taken Ireland under His special and providential care. The morality of the faithful was that in which the glory of the rising Church of Ireland chiefly consisted. Many, even of our princes, sacrificing their natural thirst for fame and laying down the shield and the sceptre, retired within the silent walls of the monastic cell, and consecrated the remainder of their days to the service of their God. Other countries were then distracted, either by wars or by heresy and schism. The continent of Eurpe, was one general scene of confusion. But in Ireland, peace religion, and happiness prevailed—her monarchs were practical christians—her heirarchy was established—her religious institutions were rising up numerous and magnificent—her schools of learning had their halls and gates thrown open for the welcome reception of all who had a desire to come and taste of the fountain of knowledge—while the board of hospitality was spread out and plentifully furnished for the traveller and the stranger, for the poor and the destitute. Hence it was that foreigners in great multitudes fled for refuge and education to Ireland during the Sixth and succeeding centuries; and to this circumstance must, most probably, be attributed that anxious desire which our great saints had, of leaving their own country and of going forth to preach the Gospel through the wilds and deserts of distant lands (*Ecclesiastical History of Ireland*). We will next find Brandon a very prominent figure in this religious Exodus. We first trace his steps from Clonard to the ever cherished place of his birth. We must picture him as he prayed, and mused, and meditated, on Brandon Head, and beside Brandon Bay—

——————— "By the western wave,
Among the mighty mountains on the shore!"

until his soul, inspired by the power that gave the beloved Apostle of JESUS a vision of the Heavenly Jerusalem, seemed to pass with prophetic power over the boundless Ocean of the West, and, anticipating, yet inspiring, in the Fifth century, in the spirit of exalted Faith and Love, the material discoveries of the Fifteenth century, hailed the New World—its first and most worthy visitor from the Old. Brandon of Kerry, on the High Altar of Kerry's consecrated coast, like another and almost a better Moses on Mount Abarim, contemplated the second Promised Land! Thus speaks the Saint through the mouth of the Poet, Denis Florence M'Carthy :—

"And as beyond the outstretched wave of Time,
The eye of Faith a brighter land may meet,
So did I dream of some more sunny clime
Beyond the waste of waters at my feet.

Some clime where man, unknowing and unknown,
For God's refreshing Word still gasps and faints;
Or, happier rather some Elysian zone,
Made for the habitation of His saints;
Where Nature's love the sweat of labor spares,
Nor turns to usury the wealth it lends,
Where the rich soil spontaneous harvests bears,
And the tall tree with milk-filled clusters bends.

The thought grew stronger with my growing days,
Even like to manhood's strengthening mind and limb,
And often now amid the purple haze
That evening breathed upon the horizon rim—
Methought, as there I sought my wished-for home,
I could descry amid the waters geen,
Full many a diamond shrine and golden dome,
And crystal palaces of dazzling sheen.

And then I longed with impotent desire,
  Even for the bow whereby the Python bled,
That I might send one dart of living fire
  Into that land, before the vision fled,
And thus at length fix thy enchanted shore,
  Hy-Brasail—Eden of the western wave!
That thou again would'st fade away no more,
  Burried and lost within thy azure grave.

But angels came and whispered as I dreamt,
  'This is no phantom of a frenzied brain—
God shows this land from time to time to tempt
  Some daring mariner across the main:
By thee the mighty venture must be made,
  By thee shall myriad souls to Christ be won!
Arise, depart, and trust to God for aid!'
  I woke, and kneeling cried 'His will be done!'"

THE VOYAGE OF ST. BRANDON TO "THE PROMISED LAND."

The 48th publication of the Percy Society, entitled 'St Brandan: a Medieval Legend of the Sea,' contains an early English metrical version of the famous Voyage, as well as a prose version, which is almost identical with that which D F MacCarthy copied from Caxton's Golden Legende, and published in the *Dublin University Magazine*, vol. 39, p. 556. The Editor of the Percy Publication, Thomas Wright, Esq, M A, F S A, Corresponding Member of the Society of France, in a valuable preface gives us some important particulars regarding the history of this Legend of St Brandon, which he says was one of the most remarkable and widely spread legends of the middle ages. He styles our saint a Christian Ulysses, and adds that his story had much the same influence on the western Catholics, as the Odyssey upon the Greeks. We have nearly conclusive reasons for believing, he says, that the Legend of St Brandon was known at an early period to the Arabs. Some of the Arabian geographers describe the 'Island of Sheep,' and the 'Island of Birds,' in words which must have been taken from our Christian Legend. He goes on to tell what is of still greater interest, 'The Legend of St Brandon, exercised an influence on geographical science, down to a late period, and it entered as an important element in the feelings of the Spanish sailors when they went to the discovery of America.' Dr Lanigan says, in Brandon's Acts the saint is said to have set out in quest of the Land of Promise from the foot of the mountain now called Brandon Hill, that is, he supposes from Brandon Bay. Colgan observes that the history of the expedition is spoken of in Irish documents of the eight century. Mr Wright thinks the Latin prose narrative was written in the eleventh century, and he informs us that metrical versions in Latin and Anglo Norman appeared in England as early as the reign of Henry I., and are preserved in manuscripts in the British Museum the Latin one in MS Cotton. Vespas D,XI,, and the Anglo-Norman version, dedicated to Henry's Queen, Aaly, in MS. Cotton, Vespas, D X.,

The MSS. of the prose Latin text, (we quote Mr. Wright's words), are very numerous; 'it has been edited with early French versions in prose and verse, by M Achille Jubinal, in an interesting volume, entitled *La Legende Latine de S Brandines, avec une traduction inedite en prose et en pœsie Romanes*, 8 vo,, Paris, 1836. to which I refer for further information on the subject, & for an account of the numerous other versions in almost every language of the west, several of which were printed in the early ages of typography.' Mr MacCarthy says in the Bibliotheque Imperial at Paris, there are to be found no less than eleven M S S, of the original latin legend, the dates of which vary from the 11th to the 14th century. In the old French and Roman dialicts copies both in prose and verse, are abundant in the various public libraries of France while versions in the Irish, Dutch, German, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese languages, are found scattered through the public and private libraries of colleges and convents all over the continent. The Spaniards and Portuguese, on several occasions fitted out flotillas for the purpose of ascertaining the exact locality of the islands mentioned as having been discovered by St Brandon.

According to Colgan, St Brandon set out on his voyage in 545, but Dr Lanigan considered it must have commenced some years earlier. as it is natural to suppose Brandon was at the time of, undertaking such a perilous work, in the vigor of his age, and not 60 years old, as he was in the year 545. MacCarthy describes first, Brandon's Visit to Arran 'Ara of the Saints' to consult St Enda :—

"Hearing how blessed Enda lived apart,
  Amid the sacred caves of Ara-mhor,
And how beneath his eye, spread like a chart.
  Lay all the isles of that remotest shore.
And how he had collected in his mind
  All that was known to men, of the Old Sea,
I left the Hill of Miracles (1) behind,
  And sailed from out the shallow sanded Leigh.

(1) Ardfert.

Betwixt the Samphire Isles swam my light skiff,
And like an arrow flew through Fenor sound (2)
Swept by the pleasant strand (3) and the tall cliff,
Whereon the pale rose amethysts are found. (4)
Rounded Myfertas rocky point and crossed
The mouth of stream streaked, Erin's mightiest tide,
Where troubled waves broke o'er the city lost.
Chafed by the marble turrets that they hide (5)

Brandon meets Holy Enda waiting for him on the shore at Arran—

"He led me to his home beside the wave.
Where, with his monks the pious father dwelled.
And to my listening ear he freely gave.
The sacred knowledge that his bosom held.

Our Saint having told the object of his mission, is rejoiced to find the venerable Abbott enter heartily into it—

"When I proclaimed the project that I nursed,
How 'twas for this, that I his blessing sought,
An irrepressible cry of joy outburst
From his pure lips, that blessed me for the thought.

He said that he, too, had in vision strayed,
Over the untracked ocean's hollowing foam;
Bad me have hope, that God would give me aid,
And bring me safe back to my native shore.

Brandon then returns home to his native Kerry—

"There I made all things ready day by day.
The wicker boat, with the ox-skin covered o'er,
Chose the 'good monks companions of my way,
And waited for the wind to leave the shore.

In due course all things were ready, and—

"At length the day, so long expected, came,
When from the opening arms of that wild bay,
Beneath the hill that bears my humble name,
Over the waters we took our untracked way;
Sweetly the morn lay on tarn and rill,
Gladly the waves played in its golden light,
And the proud top of the majestic hill
Shone in the azure air—serene and bright."

We cannot trespass further on Mr MacCarthy's beautiful and delightful work. Our readers should read the entire poem for themselves, as it appears, with introduction and notes, in the Poets' last volume, published by Bogue, Fleet-street, London.—The main incidents of the Voyage of St. Brandon have been carefully abridged in the following extract from the very pleasing "Sketch Book of Irish Seenery" written by the late Rev. Cæsar Otway:—

"Brandon hearing of the previous voyage of his cousin' Barinthus, in the Western Ocean, and obtaining an account from him of the happy isles he had landed on in the far west, determined, under the strong desire of winning Heathen souls to Christ, to undertake a voyage of discovery himself. And aware that all along the western coast of Ireland, there were many traditions respecting the existence of a western land, he proceeded to the islands of Arran, and there remained for some time, holding communication with the venerable St Enda, and obtaining from him much information on what his mind was bent. There can be little doubt that he proceeded northward along the coast of Mayo, and made inquiry, among its bays and islands, of the remnants of the Juatha Danaan people, that once were so expert in naval affairs, and who acquired from the Milesians, or Scots, that overcame them, the character of being magicians, for their superior knowledge. At Inniskea, then, and Innisgloria, Brendan set up his cross, and in after times, in his honour, were erected those curious remains that still exist. Having prosecuted his inquiries with all dilligence, Brandan returned to his native Kerry; and from a bay sheltered by the lofty mountain that is now known by his name, he set sail for the Atlantic land; and, directing his course towards the south-west, in order to meet the summer solstice, or what we would call the tropic, after a long and rough voyage, his little bark being well provisioned, he came to summer seas, where he was carried along, without the aid of sail or oar, for many a long day. This, it is to be presumed, was the great gulf stream, and which brought his vessel to shore somewhere about the Virginian Capes or where the American coast tends eastward, and forms the New England States. Here landing, he and his companions marched steadily into the interior, for fifteen days, and then came to a large river, flowing from east to west; this, evidently, was the river Ohio. And this the holy adventurer was about to cross, when he was accosted by a person of noble presence;—who told him he had gone far enough; that further discoveries were reserved for other men, who would, in due time, come and christianize all that pleasant land. The above, when tested by common sense, clearly shows that Brandon landed on a continent, and went a good way into the interior; met a great river, running in a different direction from those he heretofore crossed. It is said he remained seven years away, and returned to set up a college of three thousand monks at Clonfert."

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2. Between Fenit Island and the mainland—3, Ballyheigue—4, Very fine amethysts have been found among the cliffs near Kerryhead—Smith describes their colors as being of various degrees and shades of purple—some approach to a violet and others a pale rose color—5, it is said that the mouth of the Shannon is the site of a lost city, and that its towers and spires and turrets, acting as breakers against the de-water, occasion the roughness of It his part of the estuary—Hatils Ireland.

LOCAL NOTES.

Before the period of this voyage, Brandon had established a monastery at Ardfert, where a portion of his church—one of the most beautiful ruins in Kerry (we are quoting Mr MacCarthy's note)—still remains to this day. According to Sir James Ware (vol. 1, p. 518), Ardfert signifies "a wonderful place on an eminence;" or, as some interpret it, "the hill of miracles." Mr MacCarthy (to whose kindness we are indebted for several of the works containing the materials of this Sketch) has favored us with some interesting MSS., &c., regarding our saint; but, as Saint Brandon's life is now being written by one most competent to do it perfect justice—need we name the accomplished authoress of "the Illustrated History of Ireland"?—we will not presume to trespass in a sphere where the gifted Nun of Kenmare Convent reigns with the magic power of sterling genius. We cannot however avoid quoting here a few lines from Mr McCarthy's letter to ourselves, as they convey the author's expression of cordial sympathy with the events of Sunday next, and also pay a well deserved compliment to the memory of one who laboured with distinguished ability, and with unflagging zeal for the literature of Kerry· and especially, as will be seen, for that part of it which concerns our Patron Saint :—

Dublin, 28th May, 1868.

My Dear Sir,—I had already heard of the interesting events that are to take place on Brandon Hill; and of your intention of writing a paper on the whole subject of St. Brandon's Voyage, &c. Both circumstances, I need scarcely assure you, gave me very great pleasure . . . Along with the tract of the Percy Society, you will find an interesting appeal by the late Archdeacon Rowan of Tralee, on behalf of the ruined Cathedral of St Brandon, at Ardfert. 1 enclose a letter sent to me about the same time by the same amiable and accomplished gentleman, in which you will find a good deal of interesting matter on the whole subject. I have never been able to find out what has become of the MS. of the Metrical Life of St Brandon, on which Archdeacon Rowan was engaged, and of which he sent me a specimen—or of the transcript of the Life contained in the "Codex Kilkiensis," which he says he made. I was out of Dublin when his library was sold. Perhaps, some local inquiries might lead to the discovery of these interesting MSS. I myself would be happy to edit them, should any publisher undertake their publication. Wishing every success to the commemoration of the famous Bishop and Patron of Kerry, and feeling confident that you will do ample justice to it, I am, Dear Sir, faithfully yours,

D. F. MacCarthy.

James J. Long, Esq., Chronicle Office, Tralee.

The following is the interesting letter of Archdeacon Rowan, here alluded to :—

Belmont, Oct. 28th, 1859.

Dear Sir—I am very much obliged by your polite note, and not the less so by the volume that accompanied it, that I had a copy before, obtained among the other provisions for grappling with my Brendanic undertaking.

Had I known what I now see by your address—that we were near neighbours all last summer—I should probably have troubled you with many questions suggested by your poem, I spent the summer (all I did not pass in Horan) at Marine Terrace Kingstown with my family—and took the opportunity to make progress in my work as also to copy the M.S. in Marsh's Library, of the Prose life of St Brandon which I hope to edit, and which now that I have completed the copying 1 may call a ponderous undertaking.

The M.S. (which I have reason to believe was that used by Usher and also by Colgan) is much larger in matter than Jubinal's, or any in the British Museum I have yet seen. It would appear that the continental lives of Brandon (more numerous than of any saint of his age I believe) all deal with his marvellous voyage chiefly—passing over his late and early life, most interesting to us Irishmen. Now the Marsh's M.S. is fuller on these points and contains as I calculate nearly double the matter of Jubinal's Latin life.

I perceive that you make much more in your poem of the saint's visit to "Arran the blest" than the lives I have seen do :—I collect from them that he made a mere preparatory visit to St Endeus to consult him about his great voyage—a kind of trial trip, and indeed this he might well have done. Standing on the great Arran 1 sland last June I could trace quite distinctly the Brandon Mountain range of my own county opposite, and my son brought his little yacht from Tralee Bay to Arran in about twenty four hours. I was wishing last summer, to ask you whether your description of the coasting, was drawn from your own poet treasury of imagination, or from any life of St Brendan which contained a narrative of the kind, for I have seen none such.

My book, if I follow Dr. Reeves, insidious promptings, seconded by the promise of his valuable assistance in seeing me through press will contain the Prose Latin I have mentioned, an Irish life copied from the "Book of Lismore," and translated, if it proves worth the trouble, and a metrical version, (with translation in *kind*) obtained from Cotton M.S.S. which I consider extremely quaint and curious. I have rather a rage for that *most effective* medieval rhymed Latin of which monkish literature has so many specimens—Last year I tried my "'prentice hand" on a piece of the kind and beg your acceptance of a copy (sent with this) you may if you will put by my introduction as an abatement of the value in your estimation, but I expect that you will feel gratified by my introducing you to good old Franco, the monk, if you do not know him already. When I say my "'prentice hand." I mean at *this* kind of measure, for I am now *(pœne sexegenarius)* "old of the craft" of rhyming, as another little volume now out of print which I send will show you.

My St. Brandon will be in the same metre as "Franco's life"—Some of the passages are of extraordinary force and power. The passage describing the punishment of Judas yields to nothing in Dante's metrical Hell. His description of the Paradise of Birds, and of those fallen spirits who fell with Lucifer and yet not so low, is very effectively given. You have made a very sweet thing of it. You may be interested in the corresponding stanzas of my MSS.—So I send them to you.

Strange to say my chief difficulty is in the total lack of home material. From abroad I find abundance, but neither in the traditions of old people, nor in any memorable localities can I get any facts. His mountain, his well, and Bay, his Cathedral are known—but tho' I have applied to some of our best informed archaelogic Roman Catholic clergy, they all agree that there are no local traditions of him preserved. Your note suggesting that Brandon sailed from Ardfert for Arran, is not correct;—Ardfert is *inland*, and Ballyheigue Bay untenable for anything that floats. I have discovered a creek in "Brandon Bay" now called "St. Brandon's Quay", but I can get no Irish name for it, and my legend speaks of it thus :—

"Portus unde navigant—saltus est Brandani,
Quem sic sancti gratia—vocant christiani,
Portum gurges efficit—sinu non imimani
Defluens de rupibus lateris montani,

In addition to these, I have obtained a litany of St. Brandon alluded to by Ware and Smith but not as I can discover before published. I conclude it is the same to which Jubinal alludes at page five of his preface when he speaks of "Brendani oratis" as in the library of "St Gallen (Angleterre). I know of no library of St. Gallen in England—it is probably a misprint for St. Jacques—for this MS. was in the Royal Library as given to the British Museum. Dr. Reeves knew nothing of the tractate until I mentioned it to him.

All this, with notes and an introduction in which I shall feel bound "*liberare animam*" in an analytic attempt to distinguish the true from the fabulous in these notices of St. Brandon, will make, if not a goodly, a "bulky" volume, if (D.V.) my head and health enable me to complete it. I must also go down to Clonfert to see after Brendan's remains. We made a fruitless attempt to interest the public in restoring Ardfert (ruined in 1641). You may wish a lithograph of the fine window from a sketch of my daughters—so I send them to you—and beg of you to excuse this long and hasty note written in the freemason freedom which rhymesters venture to take with a recognised poet of his day.—Your Obedient Servant.

A. B. ROWAN.

D. F. M'Carthy, Esq.,

THE LATER LIFE OF ST. BRANDON.

After returning from the great Western Voyage, Brandon rested in Kerry. While residing here, near the ocean, and to atone for the death of a person who had been drowned in the sea, and to which our Patron feared he had involuntarily contributed, he was advised by St Ita to go to Brittany. Having paid a visit to the celebrated Guildas, the Historian of early Britain, who was then advanced in years, he went to another part of Brittany, and established a church in a place called Heth, and a monastery and schools at Ailech, where one of his disciples was St Machut or Maclovius, who afterwards became Bishop of Alectum, now St Malo. But Brandon could not live long out of Ireland. The Irish saints of old, while serving God in the full odour of sanctity, did not fail to love their native land, too, wisely and well, In Columba's poems, we see what it cost that great servant of God to obey his confessor. and leave Ireland for'ever:—

"Oh, Arran my son, my heart is in the west with thee! To sleep on thy purest soil is as good as to be buried in the land of St Peter and Paul. To live within the sound of thy bells is to live in joy. Oh, Arran my son my heart is in the west with thee!"

The following were written during Columba's exile in Iona:—

'What joy to fly upon the white crested sea and watch the waves break upon the Irish shore! Ah, how my boat would fly if its prow were turned to my Irish oak grove.—
. . . . . My foot is in my boat but my sad heart for ever bleeds! There is a grey eye which ever turns to Erin, but never in this life shall it see Erin nor her sons nor her daughters. Young traveller, carry my sorrows with thee—carry them to Comgall of eternal life. Carry my blessing across the sea, carry it to the West. My heart is broken in my breast. If death comes to me suddenly, it will be because of the great love I bear the Gael!"

Soon after Brandon's return to Ireland from Brittanny, or according to the annals of Innisfallen, in the year 562, he founded, near the Shannon, in the county of Galway, the celebrated monastery, college, and see of Clonfert. For this monastery and several others connected with it, he drew up a particular rule which was so highly esteemed that it has been supposed to have been dictated by an angel. The number of monks over whom our saint presided, partly at Clonfert and partly in other houses of his institution in varions parts of Ireland—including Ardfert and the ancient monastery in the vicinity of Brandon-head, exceeded three thousand, all of whom maintained themselves by the labour of their hands, If we except the schools of Clonard and of Bangor, says Father Brennan, this at Clonfert deserves to be ranked in the first place among the sacred and literary institutions of Ireland, Besides theological truths, philosophy, the sciences, and the general literature of the day were taught in the schools of Clonfert: and the aid which it contributed in diffusing morality at home, and in establishing the reputation of Ireland in distant countries, has been acknowled and deservedly eulogised by many of our ancient writers. Clonfert became in a few years so extensive that a bishop was considered indispensibly necessary for the purpose of ordaining missionaries. The calendar of Cashel says Brandon was raised to the mitre, and Colgan says he afterwards resigned the see to St, Moena, reserving to himself the care of his monasteries. The Cathedral of Clonfert was in those days noted for its seven altars.—St. Brandon also established a nunnery at Enach-duin, over which he placed his sister Briga. Enach-duin is now called Annadowne, It is situated near Lough Corrib in the county of Galway. In course of time it became a bishop's see, but is now united to Tuam. Henry O'Gormacan was the last Abbot of Clonfert, in 1540, when the abbey was plundered by Henry VIII., and its possessions united to the Bishopric of Clonfert.—St. Brandon retired from Clonfert some years prior to his death to a place of less bustle and care, and died in his sister's monastery of Enach-duin on the 16th of May, 577, in the 94th year of his age. His remains were interred in Clonfert. Recording his death the ancient

Biographer says, he being full of virtues, departed out of this life into life everlasting, and was worshipfully buried in a fair abbey which he himself founded, 'where our Lorde sheweth for this Holy Saynt many fayre myracles.'

May we not justly apply to this illustrious Apostle and Patron of Kerry—the Promised One of our great Patrick—the Patriarch of Monks and Star of the Western World—the sweet homage of poetic love which the church chaunts in the office of St. Finian: 'On the lily has bloomed the rose, whose leaves the spring has reddened; Erin is embalmed with it; men come from afar to breathe its perfume. There the mystic bees suck in honey, and bear it to their homes. O Falicia, thou hast borne a wondrous flower; whoever presses his lips to it, heals both soul and body!' This is the Saint whom multitudes will worthily honor in his native Kerry next Sunday, around the high-placed Oratory where he prayed and meditated, and grew in grace and years. We can not better close this introductory sketch than in the concluding words of the ancient prose life of St. Brandon, published by the Percy Society: 'Wherefore, let us devoutly praye to this holy saynt that he praye for us unto our Lord, that He have mercy on us, to whom be gyven laude, honour, and empyre, world withouten ende, Amen.'

THE CELEBRATION,

(SUNDAY, JUNE 28TH, EVE OF S.S. PETER AND PAUL).

SUNDAY last will be a day long remembered in the annals of our county. The religious services on the summit of Brandon Mountain, in honor of the Patron Saint of Kerry, took place with the greatest *eclat*, presided over by the Bishop of the Diocese, assisted by several Priests, including the Very Rev. Superiors of the Dominican and Franciscan Orders in Kerry, and joined in by some 20,000 people. Never before did such a mighty congregation assemble in Kerry for such a purpose, and under such circumstances. Never were the faith and fidelity of our people more gloriously demonstrated. They travelled many a mile; they endured much fatigue; they mastered a steep ascent over three thousand feet high—nay, hundreds went to the mountain the previous evening, and slept there all night to secure an early attendance at the sacred ceremonies, to give glory to God, and honor to one of His greatest servants in the locality consecrated by his prayers and presence. The most remarkable order and decorum prevailed throughout. Not the slightest incident occurred to mar the happy harmony and the pious devotion of the immense multitude. The day was gloriously fine, and the magnificent prospect, at all sides, as clear and beautiful as the most fastidious could desire. We can not proceed farther without making honorable mention of the pious and zealous Priest, to whose generous inspiration and indefatigable exertions we are all indebted for this splendid Catholic demonstration. We allude to the Rev T. BROSNAN, senior Curate of Tralee. With a humility worthy of his sacred office he preferred to work on unseen and unknown in public, but the joyous grateful shouts of the thousands who hailed him on the holy mountain, with their hearts on their lips, told better than any set form of words how highly and how justly his services in the cause of religion are appreciated.

In accordance with the original programme, five o'clock a.m. was the hour fixed for starting from Tralee. Punctually at that time, the people began to set out. The Rev. Mr. BROSNAN, with whom were the Very Rev. Father MURPHY, Prior O.P., Tralee, the Very Rev. Father ARSENIUS, Superior of the Franciscan Order in Killarney, and Father PRENDERGAST, O.P., Tralee, led the way, followed by the members of the Carmelite and Dominican Confraternities of Tralee on long cars, each drawn by four horses. Immediately after followed a vast number of cars containing some of the most respectable inhabitants of the town and neighbourshood. For over two hours afterwards various modes of conveyance continued pouring out of Tralee on to the West, and at every cross road on the route the *cortege* was increased by multitudes from different quarters. At the same time a large number of boats well filled were seen crossing the bay from the Spa, Kilfenura, and various other places on the coast up to Clare—all bound for the same destination. When the head of the procession neared Cloghane at half-past eight o'clock, the continuous line of cars, &c, extended to over a mile of the road, and others continued arriving at the village for hours afterwards. But long before this the mountain was

occupied by numbers who lived in the neighbourhood, or who travelled there during the night. All ages and all classes were present; the old vied with the young in activity—the women showed examples of indomitable energy worthy of the sterner sex. Merchants, shopkeepers, tradesmen, and others from the town, and even children, rivalled the rural population in mastering the difficulties of the journey. At all sides the greatest enthusiasm was displayed—all was bustle, joy, and good-humour. The refreshing showers which had fallen during the previous evening laid the dust, cooled the air, and rendered the trip in many ways more pleasant than it might otherwise have been. The day was altogether a pet day—even for smiling June.

The Bishop, having gone to Castlegregory the previous day, arrived at an early hour at Cloghane, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. IRWIN, C.C., Castlegregory, and awaited the coming of the Tralee contingent. Father IRWIN stopped at Cloghane to celebrate Mass in the Parish Church at 12 o'clock, but, though this was announced for the convenience of those who might be daunted on seeing the mountain, comparatively few availed themselves of the considerate accommodation.

The ascent of the mountain from Cloghane was commenced at 9 o'clock by the Bishop and Clergy, and the great mass of the people. A temporary altar was erected on Faha Mountain, at the base of Brandon, and here the Very Rev. Father MURPHY celebrated Mass at 11 o'clock, proceeding forward afterwards, with the most of those who halted here with him.

The Bishop and Father Brosnan reached the brow of Brandon Mountain by half-past 11 o'clock, and were greeted by a long, loud, and ringing cheer from the thousands from the other or western side who already crowded the summit. The cheer was taken up, and echoed right heartilly by the masses who were still ascending from the East. From the West to the East, through a space of several miles. that ringing shout went forth, like an electric shock, linking the gathering thousands in one common bond of gladsome sympathy. At the same moment the fog which had draped the mountain since morning passed away, as if the breath of God thus signally sanctified the work to encourage and reward those who had dared so much in such a holy cause. No words could paint the startling effect which the scene now presented, as the lofty summits of the surrounding hills—and especially that one high above all the rest, on which every eye from below was earnestly fixed—threw off the thin white drapery, and revealed themselves in all their natural glory, backed by a summer sky of spotless blue. Far above, the multitudes already assembled on the summit could be seen, while the procession of pilgrims still extended in one unbroken chain from below. The pretty banners of the Confraternities sparkled in the sunlight, and the varied dresses of the processionists—especially of the ladies—set off to still greater advantage a scene animated and picturesque in the extreme. Arrived above, the glorious prospect which Brandon summit commands burst on the astonished view with sublime effect. From every mouth went forth heart-felt words of prayer and praise to Him whose wonderful works were thus lavishly revealed. Those who brave the break-neck dangers of Alpine journeys to gratify often a mere morbid curiosity, and who fill the world with laudations of what they saw and felt on those foreign dizzy steeps, [can little imagine what a mighty thrill passed through this throng as they gazed enraptured on the glorious volume of nature's choicest works, and remembered that they came here following in the consecrated footsteps of one of God's most glorious saints, to join his pure spirit with heart and soul in offering fitting homage to the Author of all good. The two multitudes—those from the East and those from the West—joined together, and knelt around St. Brandon's Oratory, under the broad canopy of Heaven. If we had reason to rejoice at the magnificent and enthusiastic demonstration from this town, we had no less reason to feel proud of the splendid exhibition from Dingle and the entire West. Teh whole of the population, indeed, seemed to have turned out *en masse*, with all the genuine spirit of their warm generous nature, and the only draw-back to their joy, they cried out as with one voice, was, that they had not had the privileged honour of escorting the Bishop and Priests from their side of the mountain; but to satisfy their feelings as far as they could, many of them went down to Cloghane to join in his Lordship's escort, thence back again to the summit.

THE SCENE, AND ITS ASSOCIATIONS.

A fortnight ago, on the occasion of the trial trip, we described the main characteristics of the journey. Since then the stalwart men of the district, on being assured that the Bishop was determined to ascend, busied themselves in improving the path up the mountain, and the fruits of their exertions in this, their labour of love, were pleasingly evident on Sunday—The path is considerably altered for the better. We already attempted to convey some idea of the sublime scene presented from the glorious elevation of Brandon Head. We must now notice more particularly some of the most interesting points in the prospect, and the associations that render them doubly dear to all who love this land of ours,—They call back the mind to periods that will be for ever memorable in Ireland's history. The late Mr Richard Hitchcock has left us a list, made out from the Ordinance survey, and other sources, of the principal remains of antiquity in the barony of Corkaguiny, which now lies spread out at our feet. Eleven stone Cahers; three carns; forty calluraghs, or obselete burial grounds, where unbaptized children only are interred; ten castles; eighteen artificial caves; twenty-one churches in ruins, and nine church sites; two hundred and eighteen cloghauns, or bee-hive shaped stone houses; sixteen cromleacs; twelve large stone crosses; three hundred and seventy-six earthen forts, or raths: one hundred and thirteen gallauns, or immense rude standing stones; fifty-four monumental pillars, most of them bearing Ogham inscriptions; fifteen oratories; nine penitential stations; sixty wells, many of them bearing the name of some saint, and 29 miscellaneous remains. What a list! How many more fine remains, he remarks, have been lost during centuries of blind fanaticism, and internal warfare! Yet the list, as it stands, is such that he ventures to say no other part of Ireland of the same size as Corkaguiny can number so many and such a variety of ancient remains, and in such a fine state of preservation as are to be found in this interesting barony. That this district was anciently remarkable for cultivation, fertility and piety is sufficiently proved by the numerous remains of churches, monasteries, and other vestiges of advanced Christian civilization that are still to be seen. Smith's history ennumerates no fewer than twenty parish churches existing in Corkaguiny over a hundred years ago, and concludes from this fact that the barony was formerly better inhabited than at present, each parish having had its respective church, most of which were very large as appears by their ruins. He notices as another proof that the 'number of inhabitants is prodigiously decreased,' the fact that several of the mountains, though of but poor and stony soil, are marked by old enclosures, and other signs of former culture on their sides, even to the very tops. An account of a visit of the Earl of Cumberland to this district, printed in London A.D 1599, records 'The ground is very fruitful, and plentiful of grasse and graine, as may appear by the abundance of kine and cattel there, insomuch that we had good muttons (though somewhat less than ours in England) for two shillings or five groates a picce, good pigges and hennes for 3 pence a piece—good land was here to be had for foure pence yearly the acre!' But the 'Reformation' wars changed all this. Spencer saw and described the ruin and desolation of those dreadful days. In a short space of time he tells us this most populous and plentiful country was suddenly left void of man and beast. Hollinshed's Chronicle affirms that as the result of the cruel Desmond war, from one end of Munster to the other, from Waterford to Smerwick, a distance of 130 miles, no man, woman, or child was to be met except in the towns; nor any beast but the very wolves, the foxes, and such like ravening beasts!

Smerwick! There it lies at our feet, with the frowning frontlet of Fort-del-Ore clearly defined. In the reign of Elizabeth, when that remarkable woman resolved to make amends for her illegitimacy by the sin of apostacy, and to maintain her hold on the English throne by mercilessly exterminating the Catholic inhabitants of Ireland, Philip II. of Spain, who had been married to Mary Queen of England, sought, in concert with Pope Gregory XIII., to assist the persecuted Irish Catholics. In July, 1579, an expedition of Spaniards and Italians landed in Smerwick, under the command of James Fitzmaurice, and took up a position in Fort-del-Ore which they fortified. But the English navy sailed around to attack them, and Lord Deputy Gray marched forces from Dublin for the same purpose. After a seige of 40 days, the Deputy showed a flag of truce, the garrison capitulated, were disarmed, and inhumanly massacred in cold blood to the number of 600. Sir Walter Raleigh was entrusted with the butchery, Poet Spencer with the duty of recording and excusing it, and Edward Denny with the task of bearing the commander's des-

patches from the bloody field to her Majesty. So well was the work of 'Reforming Civilisation' carried out in those days that little was left in Ireland for her Majesty to reign over but carcases and ashes! But what mattered that or anything else when the Desmond Estates (600,000 acres) were forfeited and presented to the 'heroes' of the war at an average of two pence per acre, "Ned Denny," being rewarded with the hand of the Queen's favorite maid of honor, the title of Sir Edward, and 6,000 acres of Kerry. What a contrast between the 'demonstration of that bleak November day, A.D. 1580, and the exhibition of Sunday last in the immediate vicinity!

But we have meeter matter for our thoughts now as we gaze from Brandon-head, than the horrors of Smerwick, Farther on towards the south smiles in rare beauty the Bay of Dingle with the grand Skellig islands in the front, bearing marks of an older and better mission—and one more in keeping with the object of the present meeting. On the great Skellig was once a famous Druidical altar, but after Brandon spread the faith in Kerry, on the remains of that Pagan structure was founded by St Finian, in the seventh century. the noble monastery of St Michael the Archangel. The remains of the ancient abbey are still visible, though the Innisfallen Annals announce the death of one of its Priors, Flan Mac Collagh, under date, A.D., 885. Dr Rowan says, this Abbey belonged to the Canons Regular of St Augustine, was dedicated to St Michael, and flourished before the English invasion. "It now lies in utter desolation—the seawind whistles through the rents of the crumbling walls—and the sea-sand is fast burying by its encroachments buildings, which at one time covered a considerable space." There are six remarkable Hermit cells remaining, and of these ancient devotional retreats, Dr Rowan remarks "Nowhere could self-immolation be more completely effected by those who deemed it a suitable offering to God."

This part of the coast is remarkable also for the fact that the first landing of the Milesian expedition from Spain was effected here centuries before the christian era, and from this quarter did that colony diffuse itself thoughout Ireland. Further on, up Dingle Bay may be seen a glimpse of Ventry Harbour, where the fabled battle of seven days was fought out in the days of Constantine the Great. We may now look at the Blaskets or Ferriter's Islands. Smith, describing the second in magnitude, Innis MacKeilane, a century ago, said there stood in it then the ruins of an ancient chapel, in which an old stone chalice and a baptismal font also of stone still remained, likewise a small cell or hermitage being an arch of stone, neatly put together without any mortar or cement. There was one of the same kind at Fane inVentry Parish, in a ruinous condition, and another at Gallerns. 'The Irish say these cells were erected by the first missionaries who preached the Gospel in these parts, they are the same within side as the most ancient Roman arches, and were, like them, built without mortar.'

We will now look nearer home: Towards the west base of Brandon mountain, in a sheltered recess, lie some of the most interesting ruins in the whole district—ruins that bring us back immediately to the times and mission of our Saint. We find an ancient edifice called St. Brandon's House and traces of several other buildings where the colony of his monks resided. In the vicinity is the ruined church of Kilmalkedar, one of the many churches erected in this neighbourhood by the Spaniards, who, in the olden days, carried on a large trade with west Kerry. It is a beautiful specimen of ancient architecture. Not far off —at a place called Gallerus—is another of the curious stone cells, entirly perfect, though a greater antiquity is ascribed to it than to the Round Towers! Petrie, in his work on the Round Towers of Ireland, thus speaks of this devotional building: "This oratory which is wholly built of the green stone of the district, is externally twenty-three feet long by ten broad, and sixteen feet high on the outside to the apex of the pyramid. The doorway, which is placed as is usual in all our ancient churches in its west-end wall, is five feet seven inches high, two feet four inches wide at the base, and one foot four inches at the top, and the walls are four feet in thickness at the base. It is lighted by a single window in its east side, and each of the gables were terminated by small stone crosses, only the sockets of which now remain. That these oratories—though not as Dr Smith supposes the first edifices of stone that were erected in Ireland—were the first erected for Christian uses is, I think, extremely probable; and I am strongly inclined to believe that they may be even more ancient than the period assigned for the conversion of the Irish generally by their great Apostle Patrick. I should state in proof of this antiquity that adjacent to each of these oratories may be seen the remains of the circular stone houses which were the habitations of the founders; and, what is of more importance, that their graves are marked by upright pillar-stones, sometimes bearing inscriptions in the Ogham character, as found on monuments presumed to be Pagan, and in other instances, as at the oratory of Gallerus, with an inscription in the Græco-Roman, or Byzantine character of the fourth or fifth century."

Direct from Kilmalkedar to the summit of Brandon runs a stone-built pathway, whose meaning is elequently told in its local title : "The Pathway of the Saints."

The polished remains of antiquity meet us here at every turn. In excavating for stones for the temporary altars, for celebrating the Holy Sacrifice on Sunday, the peassantry brought to view ancient Sculptured Stones—which had evidently formed part of the old church of St Brandon ! Some of them are arched, and some elaborately carved somewhat in the same style as the arched stones of the front door of the old Church of Kilmalkedar, of which a clever visitor in 1845 has said : "The entrance is a perfect rounded arch with rich carving of heads, flowers and foliage, which is not very much injured by time or climate." The stones dug up on the summit of Brandon, are a foreign kind of marble, several of them are pierced through with dowel holes with appliances for gudgeons and cramps, clearly for the purpose of securing greater firmness and durability in the ancient building on this remarkgble site.

Let us turn to the opposite point. At the other side of Tralee bay, we light on Ardfert. In 1778, O'Halloran, in his " general History of Ireland, from the earliest accounts to the close of the 12th century," thus spoke of this historic spot : " St Brendan of the house of Ir, and the Patron Saint of the O'Connors Kerry, erected at Hi-Ferte, or the Territory of Miracles, commonly called Ardfert, or Ardart, a see. His successors were sometimes called Bishops of Kerry. The remains of Churches, Abbies, and religious houses with inscriptions, remarkable tombs &c., at this day, sufficiently proclaim its ancient magnificence. An anchorite tower of 120 feet high, the finest in Ireland, and standing near the Cathedral, fell down in the year 1771 ; and, as in all human probability—it fell—never to rise again ! I leave this memorial of it ; of this noble city, ancient capital of Kerry, no other monuments but the above remain, except its being the seat of the Earls of Glandore, an ancient family of this county,"—The ancient and sacred City is now threatened with final anhiliation, and the glorious old Cathedral of St Brandon in shameful ruin and neglect, is following fast to the sad fate of the grand Round Tower in company with that other splendid wreck of ancient glory—Ardfert Abbey. What memorials of the olden faith have we here ! To each and to all might we address the pathetic words of the Irish Bard—

' Was a time when joy and gladness reigned within this ruined pile,—
Was a time when bells were tinkling, clergy preaching peace abroad,
Psalms a-singing, music ringing praises to the Almighty God.

Empty aisle, deserted chancel, tower tottering to your fall,
Many a storm since then has beaten on the grey head of your wall!

Many a bitter storm and tempest has your rooftree turned away,
Since you first were formed a temple to the Lord of night and day.

Oh ! the hardship—oh ! the hatred, tyrany and cruel war,
Persecution and oppression, that have left you as you are!

Another Irish poet addressing such another scene, breaks forth into a strain of passionate devotion—

Wreck of a ruin ! lovelier, holier, far,
Thy ghastly hues of death,
Than the cold forms of newer temples are—
Shrines of a priestless faith.

In lust and rapine, treachery and blood
Its iron domes were built;
Darkly they frown where God's own altar stood,
In hatred and in guilt.

But to make thee, of loving hearts the love,
Was coined to living stone;
Truth, peace and piety together strove
To form thee for their own.

'Tis not the work of mind or hand or eye,
Builders' or sculptor's' skill,
Thy site, thy beauty, or thy majesty—
Not these my bosom thrill.

'Tis that a glorious monument thou art
Of the true faith of old,
When faith was one in all the nations heart,
Purer than purest gold.

Love of my love, and temple of my God !
How would I now clasp thee
Close to my heart, and, even as thou wast trod
So with thee trodden be !

Oh, for one hour a thousand years ago
Within thy precincts dim,
To hear the chant in deep and measured flow,
Of psalmody and hymn !

To see of priests the long and white array
Around thy silver shrines—
The people kneeling prostrate far away,
In thick and chequered lines.

To hear in piety's own Celtic tongue
The most heart-touching prayer,
That fervent suppliants e'er was heard among,
O, to be then and there !

How strongly do those thoughts surge through the hearts of the mighty multitude who knelt around Brendan's ruined oratory under the open arch of heaven, on Sunday, to worship where generations of saints had ministered ! Well has M. de Barneval exclaimed, summing up the eventful and eloquent history, which may be read right readily from Brandon-head : Thus have centuries perpetuated the alliance of the Saints and the People, of Catholicity and Ireland, founded by St. Patrick, and cemented by his disciples—Revolutions have failed to shake it—persecution has not broken it; it has gained strength in blood and tears; and, we may believe, after thirteen centuries of trial, that the Roman faith will disappear from Ireland only with the name of St, Patrick and the last Irishman !

Are proofs needed ? See those kneeling thousands ! See Brendon's consecrated successor, where two centuries ago it would have been death for him to appear. See here the indomitable *Soggarth Aroon* boldly organising

the grand and sublime services of the old church on the bare hill top, in the clear noon-day, in the face of heaven and earth, where he should, some generations ago, hide and hurry in caves and caverns, with the price of a wolf on his head. See here the Prior of New Muckross, with sandalled feet, and the cowl and cord of St. Francis. See the Prior of Holy Cross Abbey garbed in the spotless white robes of St. Dominick—the beloved Friars Preachers—established by the banks of the Leigh by the Princely Geraldyne, and joyfully reestablished in the olden home, though two centuries ago the community were banned and proscribed, and their holy leader condemned to a martyr's crown beside lovely Lough Lene. See, the Bishop, who gladdens and blesses these thousands now, is of the same race and leniage as Prior Moriarty, whose blood was sacrificed on Fair Hill, to destroy the priests of the people and the people's faith. Oh, fools! knew ye not that the blood of martyrs is the seed of saints?

Having failed to crush God's work with the arms of the evil one, the enemy, in the agency of some poor bigots, who remain to-day to the disgrace of modern enlightenment, hoped to smother this mighty upheaving of the People's Faith and Devotion by desecrating the holy hill with Soupers' tracts, hoarsely croaking of "Superstition." Hear the glorious addresses delivered to-day on this holy mount ye wretched railers; take advantage of those lessons of lofty wisdom to remove the clouds of ignorance and folly by which ye are oppressed, and apply those words of light and love to direct and warm your dark, cold, cruel hearts.

Away to the West we look. *There* is Valencia, the terminus of the Atlantic telegraph. Through that pathless ocean, extending for thousands of miles, works that mysrerious electric spark. which makes two worlds one.

Is there no meaning in this wonder being accomplished so near the place where Brandon sailed out and discovered that Promised Land? A Land of bright Promise indeed has America proved to Ireland in her hour of sorest need.—Truly, has been fulfilled the prophecy of the angel to our Patron thirteen hundred years ago, on bidding him return from the New World to the Old, as we are told in the pious record:—

"Father, return, thy mission now is o'er;
God who did call thee here, now bids thee go,
Return in peace unto thy native shore
And tell the mighty secrets thou dost know.
Seek thy own isle—Christ's newly bought domain,
Which nature with an emerald pencil paints;
Such as it is, long, long shall it remain,
The School of Truth, the College of the Saints,
The student's bower, the hermit's calm retreat,
The stranger's home, the hospitable hearth,
The shrine to which shall wander pilgrim feet.
From all the neighbouring nations of the earth.

But in the end upon that land shall fall
A bitter scourge, a lasting flood of tears,
When ruthless tyranny shall level all
The pious trophies of its earlier years;
Then shall this land prove thy poor country's friend,
And shine, a second Eden, in the West,
Then shall this shore its friendly arms extend,
And clasp the outcast exile to its breast."

So has it been, and so shall it continue. While Ireland needs a friend, Brendan's Land of Promise will not fail her.

We have noted several of the points of special interest that challenge attention in this remarkable locality, hoping that they will all, henceforward, become familar as Household Words. We cannot leave the general subject without supporting our views by the opinion of an able and impartial judge: C W Hamilton, Esqr., in the first vol., of the Geological Journal of Dublin, after speaking of the variety and beauty of the wild flowers which adorn the sides of the Kerry Coast Highlands. proceeds: "If the lovers of the picturesque beauties of nature knew but half the glorious scenery that is to be found among them (the mountains), this extreme point of western Europe, would be more frequently visited and acknowledged, as equal to any of the favourite haunts of tourists. If we walk along the shores, we see mural precipices of eight hundred feet in height, opposed as barriers to the vast Atlantic, whose waters, in their calmest mood, break against the rocks with a violence which conveys an idea of the power and strength of the ocean, hardly appreciable by those who are acquainted only with the channel seas. If we ascend the mountains, we are charmed with the wildness of their rocky defiles, the richness of their flowery vegetation exceeding anything. I have seen, and the depth at which the lakes are embosomed in the midst of them. The precipices over Connor Lake, rise to about fifteen hundred feet above its surface. From the summit of Brandon a panorama is exhibited, of which I know no equal." Let us hope that the inspiring events of Sunday will herald a brighter and happier era in every respect, for this rich and beautiful country. We must now record

THE CEREMONIES OF THE DAY.

And here it is but right to mention the names of the Committee of Management, appointed at the public meeting in Tralee on the 11th of last month. They were Messrs Michael Butler, James Casey, William Coffey, Charles Falvey, Patrick Flynn, William Flynn, Eugene Harrington, John Gleeson, Patrick Hayes, Laurence Hickey, Doctor Hurley, Robert Kelly, Maurice Mahony, John Moriarty, Denis M'Craith, David O'Connor, Maurice O'Connell, Patrick O'Shea, William Lenihan, R Leonard, M L Lyons, J J Long, P Tynan, Laurence Redmond, Simon Shea, and John White.

The members of the Carmelite Confraternity, and of the Confraternity of the Holy Rosary, attached to the Parish Church, and Holy Cross Church, Tralee, respectively, and who put on their habits on the brow of the mountain, numbered over one hundred. The choir consisted of Rev Father Prendergast, O P, and Michael Butler, Esq, tenors; Miss O'Brien, Miss Mahony, and Miss Gleeson, suprano; Messrs P Healy, and G and R Hoare, bass.

The Dingle Christian Brothers, with their esteemed superior, Rev Brother Rice, were very zealous and efficient in forwarding the arrangements on the mountain.

Immediately after arriving on the brow of the mountain, the choir led by Father Prendergast, of Holy Cross Church, Tralee; and the Confraternies clad in their habits preceded by the cross-bearer, and bearing aloft beautiful banners—those of the Blessed Virgin, St Brandon, St Ita,

St Patrick and St Bridget, being most conspicuous—formed a procession and singing a litany, proceeded to St Brandon's Oratory and formed around the Altar. At the western end of the Oratory within its precincts but more in view of the multitude, a temporary altar was erected. Here the Bishop celebrated first Mass, assisted by Father Brosnan and Father Arsenius. It was then deemed advisable to remove somewhat lower down the mountain, so as to be more within view of the masses there. Here another temporary altar was erected at which Father Arsenius officiated. Solemn Mass, *coram episcopa*, was next sung by Father Brosnan. The highly efficient choir from Tralee, led by Father Prendergast and Michael Butler, Esq., sang Mozart's Twelfth Mass in admirable style.

Never was a more sublime scene presented—than that offered to the honor and glory of God, as the High Priest Celebrant, raised the consecrared Host on high, while many thousand worshippers—all, animated by the same holy feelings, from the venerable mitered prelate down to the peasant child—bent to the earth in lowly adoration.—When Mr Butler sung the grand *Laudate*, every one present felt something of a foretaste of the exalted bliss of the angelic choirs, for the eternal enjoyment of which man was created, and to merit the possession of which this pilgrimage to Brandon Summit, reminded all, should be the only and solid aim and object of life's journey.

THE SERMONS.

The several Masses having concluded,

The Very Rev. Father Eustace Murphy, O.P., Prior of Holy Cross Abbey, Tralee, then addressed the multitude as follows:—Grand and wondrous, dear brethren, is the scene which at this moment presents itself, and, as we look round, expands before our view. The heart of Catholic Kerry is evidently pierced to-day to its inmost core; and her people, therefore, assemble in crowds under the guidance of their venerated and saintly Bishop to proclaim aloud their Faith, and to give evidence to the world that they are now what their fathers were 14 hundred years ago—the followers of Christ, and the humble and loving children of His holy Church.—Blessed be God! the present is a glorious spectacle to witness after centuries of struggling and suffering for His own most holy cause! Thousands—nay, tens of thousands of men, and women and children—all led by one impulse of faith—congregate together on the summit of a mountain, some thousands of feet above the level of the sea, and which has been reached only after several hours of fatigue and toil, to feast their souls with the conviction that they are pleasing their own St. Brendon by manifesting respect for his memory, and bringing down the dew of Heaven on themselves and their families by honouring one of God's most sanctified and illustrious servants. Little did St. Brendon think when as a boy he was lisping his prayers at the base of this mighty hill that the day should come when all Kerry would hasten to visit the spot hallowed by his Saintly presence; and still less did he ever suppose that the elevated spot which he chose for the purposes of penance and contemplation would be beset by myriads, coming as you have all come to-day, to ask his prayers and implore his protection. But, oh! such is sanctity, it has an embalming efficacy; and the true servant of God will ever live in the affections of His people. Years roll on—time goes by—centuries accumulate on centuries—revolutions come—thrones are overturned—even the altar is borne away before the turgid flood of infidel excesses—but God, "who is wonderful in his saints," guards their memories from oblivion, and in His own right time He causes them, as the Scripture announces, "to declare all His wonderful works, which the Lord Almighty hath firmly settled to be established for His glory."—You were right, my brethren, in coming here to-day in the might of your countless numbers, and the majesty of your imposing order. There was no confusion—no disturbance. Like the Israelites following Moses, or rather like the Jews accompanying Jesus to the mountain-top, you followed in peace and patience your annointed leader to this lofty spot to-day; and your conduct, so eminently Christian in every respect, whilst it shews that the instincts of faith alone dictated your action, gives at the same time the contradiction to those who would gladly fix on this religious uprising of a people the seal of folly, or perhaps even try to stamp it with the stigma of debasing superstition. Oh, senseless men! why do you not remember that the folly of this world is the wisdom of God! Why do you not renounce the sources of worldly thought and silly ideas, and drink in your inspirations from the blessed fountains of Divine wisdom? Folly and superstition, indeed! Does not the Holy Ghost in the Book of Wisdom say of the saints—"They shall judge nations, and rule over people, and their Lord shall reign for ever." Does not the same Holy Spirit, in reference also to His saints, exclaim—"Let the people show forth their wisdom, and the Church declare their praise;" and with these declarations, coming from the Most High, and, seeing the close connection which is thus established between the servants of God in Heaven and His faithful followers still on earth, oh! is it to be wondered at that you, my brethren, whose greatest glory is that you are the disciples of Christ, and the faithful children of his Church, should have seized the opportunity which so happily offered, and, regardless of all personal inconvenience, have manifested by coming to this mountain to day—not a cold, measured, formal devotion, but an unbounded, enthusiastic, all-engrossing love and veneration for no less a saint than the patron of your own land—for that blessed Brendon, who drew his first breath on your native soil, who sanctified your fathers by his blessed teaching, and hallowed your country by his tears of penance and devotion! You were right, I repeat, my brethren, in coming here to-day, for not only have you honoured the Saint of your country

and your love by visiting in solemn procession the scene of his watchings, and, no doubt, the battle-field of his triumphs over the powers of darkness, but you have also evidenced the intensity of your religious feeling, and the unalloyed purity of your holy Faith, by absorbing into yourselves as it were the sentiment which led him to choose this mountain as his place of retreat, and to fix upon it as the one cherished spot where he was to pour forth his heart, and empty out his very soul into the bosom of his God. In selecting this retired and elevated mountain pinnacle, and erecting upon it his wide-famed Oratory St. Brandon was, no doubt, not only following the impulse of the Holy Spirit, but, also, illustrating a feeling which has ever seemed dear to God, and has at all times found expression in the lives of His chosen servants. Mountains have always seemed to possess a peculiar charm for the Mighty Being who formed the world out of chaos, and the children of His love, and rightful heirs of his celestial kingdom, have ever appeared to participate in their great Creator's predilection for those lofty monuments, which proclaim so strikingly the magnificence and power of their Divine Architect! Yes—flesh and blood may not understand it—cold infidelity will profess to sneer at it—persons of empty heads, and sickly hearts, and that wretched tribe of self-conceited fools who may be known by their loudly-professed devotion to the principles of common sense—all these, no doubt, will instinctively recoil from even trying to see a reason for the great movement of to-day, which to their eyes appears absurd; but the fact—the great truth—remains, that mountains have been at all times the theatres of God's mightiest doings in regard to man, the chosen spots of retreat for His greatest servants, the most famous points of resort for Christian men who seized the pilgrim's staff, and the places most universally consecrated in the pious traditions of nations and peoples to the exercises of penance and of prayer! Was it not, for instance, on the mountain of Horeb that God spoke to Moses, and gave to him His commission to extricate from bondage the people of Israel! Was it not from Mount Sinai that he thundered forth His laws to His people, and gave that imperishable code, known as the ten commandments, which remains to this day, and will continue for ever the standing testimony of His infinite wisdom! Can we forget the fact, already referred to, that the Saviour fed the multitude with a few loaves and fishes on a mountain top! That on a mountain He announced the heavenly doctrines comprised in the Eight Beatitudes! That on a mountain He was transfigured—on a mountain He was crucified—on a mountain He delivered His last and parting discourse to His apostles—and, in fine, that from a mountain He took His departure from this earth and ascended into Heaven to dwell for ever with His Eternal Father! Can we, I say, forget these striking facts, or fail to recognise in them that the Almighty has linked the idea of lofty eminences with the great and stupendous works, which, from time to time, as man's necessities demanded, and His own infinite goodness prompted, He accomplished for the benefit and happiness of the human race! Moreover, dear brethern, if we presume to pass from the Mighty Creator Himself to consider the actions of His devoted and inspired servants, we find that Abraham immediately on his election to be the father of God's people, built an altar to the Lord on the mountain of Bethel—that Moses frequently ascended a mountain to pray—that Elias, fleeing from the wicked Jesabel (that true type at all times of the persecutors of God's ministers and people) had on a mountain a vision of the Most High—and that the same great prophet, whilst on a mountain, ordered the unwilling clouds to give forth rain, and bid the shut up sluices of Heaven to open wide, and flood the thirsty earth with refreshing waters! Bethel, Horeb, Carmel, Sinai, Thabor, Olivet, but, above all, Calvary, these are sounds which always stir up an unearthly feeling in the true Christian's breast. St Brendon and our other great, or as I may more properly call them, our wondrous Irish Saints, felt their force and yielded to their influence—The hidden, secret, all-controlling power, which these sacred words exercise over the soul, blessed with faith, is, no doubt, a clue to the sympathising feel with which the people of God have always regarded devotions with which mountains were associated; and this circumstance alone, will, I hope, together, of course, with your most reasonable predileetion for the saint of your own flesh and blood, as I may term St Brendon, satisfactorily account, without seeking causes in the silly or filthy depths of folly or superstitution, for the fire and enthusiasim which were awakened from centre to sea throughout this great Catholic county, as the religious movement opened and progressed amongst you, which, thank God, has had to day its imposing and happy accomplishment on the towering summit of this majestic, historic, and blessed mountain. And now, my dear brethren, I must not detain you any longer. Your beloved Bishop, who has brought down a benediction on this movement by his blessing and by his presence, and the good Priest who initiated its rise, and fostered its growth, and now witnesses its success, are, I believe, to address you. Besides, the mists which are fast gathering, and the shades of evening which will soon descend, remind us that we must think at once of returning to our far distant homes. Indeed, when I start my glance from this gigantic height, and look down into the wondrous depths below; when I think of the almost perdendicular point which we have reached, and reflect that the same paths, and projecting rocks, and sparkling rivulets are all to be encountered, and considering the cause, thank God, cheerfully encountered in our downward course; when I call to mind these things, I feel I ought not detain you longer. I must then, dear brethren, conclude, but, before doing so, I will express the fervent hope that as you came here for God, and to honour His Saint, so will you, as you make your journey from this mountain-top, think of that mountain which is above all mountains, from which, being your home, there is no deseent, around which no mists gather, and whose inconceivable beauties are bathed in perpetual light. Think. Oh! think of that bright Kingdom—Heaven—which, like this glorious mountain, its befitting type, is reached, indeed, by a narrow pass, and through a route which requires even daily sacrifices, but which once reached is reached for ever, where there are no tears,, but all is joy, and where you will meet your sainted loved ones, and St. Brendon, and the other glorious saints of our ever faithful Irish race, and St. Joseph and the Blessed Virgin, but before and above all, where you will gaze with enraptured love, on the Adorable Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to whom be honour, praise and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

His Lordship the Most Rev, Dr Moriarty said—My dear brethren, the worthy son of St Dominic, who has just addressed you, has given an eloquent expression to

the spirit of this religious ceremonial. When Father Brosnan proposed to me some time ago to come and visit Brendon Hill, I looked upon it as a pleasant excursion, and, at the same time, a pious pilgrimage. I have often come to the base of this glorious mountain and looked with wistful eye towards its summit, but the visitation of the parish always occupied the hours I could spend here, and the same duty hurried me away to other places. One part, at least, of the spirit of S Brendon has descended on me—his love of these mountain solitudes, of these gigantic altars, which the hand of God Himself has raised. I looked upon our visit as a pious pilgrimage. To-morrow Rome and the Christian world celebrate the festival of the great Apostles Peter and Paul, and why should not Kerry pay homage to the Saint to whom her forefathers were indebted for the light of the Gospel? So, I said, "We will adore in the place where his feet have stood." I had then no idea that we should have so many companions of our pilgrimage. I knew that the hardy mountaineers of the place would ascend with us to the old oratory, and join us here in prayer and sacrifice. but, to my astonishment, I soon heard that numbers intended to come from Dingle and Tralee. Then I found that the movement had spread round about, and that, without any effort to excite it, on the contrary, that, notwithstanding efforts to restrain it on the part of the prudent or the timid, it took a dimension which caused me to fear that some in their zeal might exceed the limits of discretion. Some days ago I crossed the Shannon to visit the hallowed sanctuaries of Inniscattery, and those brave islanders who dwell round the shrine of St Senanus told me they would round the headlands, and meet me on Brendon. It would seem as if Senanus rejoiced in Heaven at the honor to be paid to his brother in the Apostleship, and that his spiritual children, whose home is on the deep, turned with devotion to the Sailor Saint of Kerry. And now, what may be the practical result of the pilgrimage of to-day? It will be a solemn record of the devotion of our people to their Patron Saint. The Saints of our native land have been too much forgotten, too little honored amongst us. They stamped the Christian name indelibly on our island, they burned the Christian spirit into the very heart's core of our people, they gave to Ireland a proud place in the church's history, and, yet, it must be admitted the story of their lives is little known, and, with a few signal exceptions, their praises are not often heard, and their festivals are often unheeded. This should not be. St Paul tells us to remember those holy men who spoke to us the word of God, whose faith he bids us follow, remembering the end of their conversation. In the spirit of this Apostolic counsel the Church wishes us to pay special honour, and to seek the special patronage of those Saints, through whose ministry our fathers were brought into the fold of Christ. In the days of trouble that have passed, the Church of Ireland, like a wonderer in the desert, could retain little more than was essential to her life. Her ceremonial was curtailed, and that outward glory which belongs to a season of peace and power departed from her. The clergy celebrated in their Divine office and in the sacred litergy the name of St Brendon, but for near a hundred years his festival has not been kept as a holiday, and I well remember that when I first ordered High Mass in our Cathedral, on the 16th of May, the day sacred to his memory, many said they did not hear his name before. This mountain bears witness against them, and I expect that this gathering to-day will bring back the memories of the days of old. We read in the second book of the Machabees that in the days of Israel's captivity the Priests privately took the sacred fire from the altar, and buried it in a deep pit in a valley. And when many years had passed, Nehemias sent some of the posterity of the Priests who hid it to seek for the sacred fire. They found no fire, but thick water. He commanded them to lay on the sacrifice, and he sprinkled it with the water they had found, and immediately the sun shone upon it, and a great fire was kindled. Brethren, the sacred fire of our ancient altars seemed as if hidden in the days of our captivity. It was buried in the fastnesses of our mountains, but the sun of liberty shines upon it now. The days of our captivity are passed, and again it is kindled into a mighty blaze.—Brethren, everything around us now betokens an awakening which links the present with the far distant past. Some thirteen hundred years ago Brendon was born, as we are told, in the marsh country near Tralee. It would seem that, like the great Anchorites who were destined for an enduring Apostleship, like Benedict in Subiaco, he sought the solitude of this mountain. We may piously suppose that he inhabited that ruined oratory in which we just now offered the Holy Sacrifice.—It has been ever since an object of veneration to many a pilgrim, and to-day a large multitude, leaving Tralee in the early morning. have travelled these thirty miles, and toiled up the steep and rugged ascent, and I saw as I ascended with them that their hearts were full of gladness for they were treading in the footprints of their Patron Saint. If we look down to the western base of the mountain, towards Smerwick, we find there that belt of ancient cells and oratories which tells of the great monastic colony who placed themselves under the guidance of St Brendon, and the tradition of the people who dwell here, says that such was their number that their procession reached from the Monastery below to their oratory on the summit, stretching along the path which is still called the pathway of the saints. If the sea-fog cleared away I am told that we might see from this spot the Island of Arran, where the Saint went from hence to visit St Enda, and looking to west we see now the same ocean on which St Brendon launched his boat, and made that wonderful voyage which has been celebrated in song throughout all Europe, and which, most probably, led our saint to the continent of America. The legend says, that an angel met him on the banks of a river and bid him to return for the time was not yet come. St Brendan, on his return, went to evangelize the Guals, and this looks like a foretokening of the missionary history of Ireland. In the centuries that immediately followed the time of Brendon, Ireland sent legions of missionaries into ancient Gaul and Germany.—But the time foretold by the angel to Brendon is

now come, and so the missionary spirit of Ireland takes wings and flies to the West, and from shore to shore, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, the sons of Ireland, aye, and her daughters too, are carrying out the work of that Apostleship which Brendon sought and sighed for, but which, like the ancient Patriarchs, he could only salute from afar. And now, my dear people, let me say that I look upon this vast assemblage of many thousands on this mountain-top as a grand profession of your faith. There are not many countries in the world in which such a spontaneous movement would take place. It was not you who followed me hither, it was I that followed you. Some will ask what was the reason, what was the purpose of your coming? The less the apparent reason or purpose the stronger the religious sentiment, the living force of faith which moved so many. When I think of my own unworthiness to be the pastor of such a people, I feel afraid to bless you; but I stand here as the Comorba of Brendon. I derive from him, he from Patrick, Patrick, from Celestine, Celestine from Peter, Peter from Christ and it is only because of the office and authority which hat lofty lineage confers on me that 1 now raise my hands to bless you.

His Lordship then pronounced the Episcopal Benediction, with forty days' indulgence.

Father Brosnan next addressed the people in Irish—the old native tongue of St Brandon—and moved the multitude with thrilling power. He treated at length on the origin of the present movement, its history and objects.

We have seen many exhibitions of the faith and devotion of our people but nothing before to equal this. To look at the Bishop surrounded by the multitnde on this lofty eminence and blessing them individually as he passed among them, with a beautiful smile lighting up his countenance, recalling some of the most touching scenes in sacred writ, was enough of itself to compensate for all the difficulties of the undertaking over which Father Brosnan so bravely and deservedly triumphed. The descent from the mountain was accomplished with safety and ease. The wishes of the committee were strictly observed; not a single tent was erected—nothing occurred to mar the happy effect of the celebration. Some Souper's tracts were indeed strewed about, and, probably coming from the same silly source, placards professng to emanate from 'the 1rish Republic' were pickcd up on the mountain summit; but these things ouly demonstrated that an enemy was at work, showing his teeth where he could not bite. We hope the author of these tricks remained to pray where he came to scoff, and that he took away at last good to himself where he meant to inflict harm on others. On arriving at Cloghane a bonfire was found blazing brilliantly, and similar testimonials of general and special rejoicing, with lond and hearty cheers, greeted the party at various points on the return journey home. Tralee was reached by most of the cars by ten o'clock, p m.

ADENDUM.

We need scarcely call attention to the subjoined able article from our talented cotemporary, the *Nation*, on the Mount St. Brandon celebration, which has now passed from a local into a National subject. The reproach, that for centuries nothing had been done by the people of St. Brandon's native county to celebrate his sacred memory, or recall the facts of his eventful life, can, thank God, no longer be repeated.—"The happy thought" of Father Brosnan has been as happily consummated, and the interesting scene of the last Sunday of June, 1868, has, it will be seen, already suggested other noble thoughts, and other glorious works of grace and religion, whose perfect realization will be among the future triumphs of Catholic Ireland:—

St. Patrick, during his mission in Munster, foretold that 'St Brandon of the race of Hua-Alta, a great patriarch of monks, and the star of the Western world, would be born; and that his birth would take place some years after his own death.' Our Apostle died in 485, A.D., and twenty years afterwards, in 484, his prophecy was fulfilled, and the Patron Saint of Kerry was born, not far from Tralee.

The period to which St Brandon's birth has been referred was one fruitful in great glory for the Church in Ireland. In every quarter of the land, churches and monasteries might be seen rising; then began to be built those schools and colleges which, down to the Middle Ages, continued to attract to their halls the youths of Continental nations. Both sexes participated in the glory of this *renaissance;* and, we are told, in the neighbourhood of holy anchorets lived anchoretesses no less holy. Companies of virgins followed their spiritual mothers. as troops of disciples journeyed with their masters. The Sisters became the possessors of the houses which the monks built; the convents were open equally to the brethren and the sisters; and in this way, arose those relations among the members of both sexes which produced such happy fruit. The Sisters became the nurses of the young; and their pupils frequently became Bishops and Abbots. A female descendant of the princely house of the Desii, in the county of Waterford, whom the the annalists style St 1ta, was enrolled at an early age in the list of consecrated virgins. She repaired to the territory of Hy-Conaill, in the county of Limerick, in which she fixed her residence. and was soon joined by great numbers of pious maidens. There is little doubt that Brandon was reared by St 1ta, and that he retained for his forster mother during his life the most devoted filial affection. After having spent five years with Ita, Brandon was led away by Bishap Ercus of Slane, a friend of St Bridget in order to receive from that prelate an education suited to his advancing years. He completed under him his elementary course, and then proceeded to Tuam, to pursue the theological studies under the great St Jarlath. We next find him at Clonard in Meath, the seat of St Finian's School.—From this time forth Brandon's life was dedicated to preaching the word of God. He founded at Ardfert a monastery, and he lived and laboured with a number of men, whose names are amongst the brightest in the Calender of our Saints,

About the year 545, or, as some say, earlier, St Brandon set out on his wonderful transatlantic voyage of discovery. He had previously heard of the voyage of his cousin, Bainthus, in the Western Ocean, and had obtained from him an account of the discoveries he had made. Then, under a strong desire of winning heathen souls to Christ, he determined on making a voyage of discovery. All along the western coast of Ireland, there were many traditions respecting the existence of a western land, and accordingly St Brandon went to the islands of Arran, making inquiries as he went among the bays and islands, and in Arran he held communication with, and got valuable in formation from, the venerable Abbot Enda. After making diligent inqiries, St Brandon returned to Kerry; and from a bay sheltered by the lofty mountain that bears his name, the precursor of Columbus sailed for the far-off western land. He went in a south-westerly direction, past the Pillars of Hercules, beyond which the mariners of antiquity dared not go; and, after a long and rough voyage, he at length came to summer seas, where he was carried along for many a day without the aid of sail or oar. He landed somewhere about the Virginian capes, or where the American coast tends eastward, and forms the New England States. He and his companions marched from this spot into the interior for fifteen days, and came to a large river flowing from the east to the west, supposed to be the river Ohio. At this point he was accosted by a person of noble presence, who told him he had gone far enough, and that it was reserved to other men and other times to open up and Christianise all that pleasant land. Brandon went no farther; and after remaining seven years away he returned to set up a college of three thousand monks at Clonfert. This college deserves to be ranked in the first place among the sacred and literary institutions of Ireland. Theology, philsoophy, the sciences, and general literature were taught within its walls; and the numbers that resorted to it for their education were so great that in a few years it became necessary to appoint a bishop for the purpose of ordaining missionaries. St Brandon was himself the first bishop, but soon resigned the mitre to St Moena. On the shore of Lough Corrib, in the County of Galway, at a place then called Enach-duiin, now Annadoun, Brandon established a nunnery over which he placed his sister Briga. He retired from Clonfert shortly before his death, which took place in his sister's monastery, in the 94th year of his age, in the year 577. His remains were interred in Clonfert.

Such was the life of Saint Brandon. For nearly thirteen centuries nothing had been done by the people of his native county to celebrate his memory, or recal the facts of his life, until the happy thought of celebrating Mass on the top of the mountain which bears his name, and of thus bringing the people together, struck the mind of an humble curate of the Diocese of Kerry—the Rev Timothy Brosnan. On Sunday week the people of Kerry paid this long-delayed tribute of respect. The interesting scene has been fully described in our last number. It was one which none who witnessed can ever forget: and it suggested to many minds the question whether similar pilgrimages to the holy places of our island might not be organised and carried out with great advantage to the best interests of our people.

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